

**MINUTES OF THE 98th MEETING OF THE EXPORT INSPECTION COUNCIL
18 JANUARY 2006**

- Chairman** : **Dr. Christy Fernandez,**
**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, EIC

Director, EIC welcomed the Chairman and members of the Council to its 98th meeting.

Item 1.2 Opening remarks by the Chairman, EIC

Chairman, EIC in his opening remarks expressed that a number of issues which were of importance had been included in the Council Agenda. Issues relating to professional analysis of the activities of EIC and EIAs as well as certain new areas of work for EIC and the long pending issues of manpower were of great significance to the organisation. He hoped that with the cooperation of the members these issues would be sorted out during the meeting.

Item 1.3 Leave of absence

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

1. Shri P.R.Saha, Director General Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Kolkata.
2. Shri G. Mohan Kumar, Chairman, MPEDA Cochin
3. Shri Irfan Allana, M/s Frigorifico Allana Ltd., Allana House, Mumbai.
4. Shri R.K. Bansal, Director, Fruits and Vegetables and Preservation, Ministry of Food Processing, New Delhi
5. Shri Anil K.Mittal, M/s Khushi Ram Behari Lal Ltd., Delhi.
6. Shri J.S Bhasin, M/s. Bharat Springs Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai.
7. Shri N.S. Rajkumar Mandradiar, Managing Partner, M/s P. Mithualaul Lalh & Sons, Chennai

ITEM 2 97th meeting of the Export Inspection Council

Item 2.1 Confirmation of the Minutes

The Council confirmed the Minutes of the 97th meeting of Export Inspection Council held on 28 January 2005 without any modification.

Item 2.2 Action Taken Report

Director, EIC briefed members of the Council about the actions taken on the decisions of the previous meeting.

The Council noted the actions taken. However, with regard to Item 3.4.5 on the issue of filling up of vacant posts under Group-C cadre by way of promotion from the feeder cadre, Agency-wise, the Council desired that the matter be taken up with the Ministry once again requesting them to expedite the decision.

On Item 3.6, Manpower Requirement in EIC/EIAs, a great deal of concern was expressed on the fact that the issue of recruitments was not getting sorted out inspite of increasing number of retirements and depletion of technical manpower. It was strongly expressed that it was necessary to immediately recruit technical manpower for EIAs so that the organisation was in a position to perform its statutory functions. It was also observed that as EIAs are not getting any non plan budgetary support from MOC&I, approvals for recruitments were not needed from the Government. The representative from BIS also informed the Council that BIS had got exemption for implementation of ADRP and were allowed to carry out recruitments based on vacancies without any further reference to Government of India on the grounds that BIS is not getting any budgetary support from the Government of India. The Chairman desired that the exact position with regard to BIS may be obtained and got examined whether it could be adopted in EIAs.

It was agreed that the issue should be addressed on priority and as far as posts in Technical Cadre are concerned, recruitment should be immediately made as per the needs of the organisation.

Director, EIC was advised to work out a proposal covering organisation's manpower requirement, recruitment pattern, financial implications, difficulties etc., based on which the issue would be discussed and finalized in the next Council meeting which was fixed for 6th February 2006. It was further decided that all issues relating to recruitments as well as other pending important administrative issues would also be discussed in that meeting.

ITEM 3 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND DECISION OF THE COUNCIL

Item 3.1 Notification on Export of Pet Food and Animal By- Products

The matter was discussed at length. Discussions also covered the broader issue of need and importance of export certification as well as of role clarity of EIC vis-à-vis Export Promotion bodies.

Representatives of both Seafood and dairy industry expressed that EIC certification had been extremely beneficial in facilitating exports and streamlining and increasing exports. It was also expressed that export certification should be a role distinct from export promotion and the same to be addressed by different bodies. Further, since there is a clear demarcation as per the rules and the statute for both EIC as well as export promotion

bodies, quality assurance role for exports need to be performed by EIC. Other members of the Council also expressed similar views. On the other hand, JS (EI&EP) and Chairman, APEDA were of the view that wherever organizations other than EIC are already performing certification activities and there are no complaints whatsoever from the exporters, there may not be any need to disturb the existing arrangement.

Chairman, EIC observed that EIC's primary role is to act as an independent 3rd Party Certification Body and there is a need to further strengthen its activities so that it is able to perform the statutory role enshrined in the Export (Quality Control & Inspection) Act, 1963 more effectively. He expressed that as long as there is a need of an independent 3rd party certification, EIC's role cannot be reduced in certification and rather it needs to be encouraged and further strengthened.

As far as notification on Export of Pet Food and Animal By-Products is concerned, the Council decided that notification in this regard is definitely required and decided to recommend it to the Ministry for issuing necessary notification.

Item 3.2. Certification Issues

3.2.1 *EIC's role as Supervisory Body for Raw Meat (Chilled / Frozen)*

The issue was discussed in great detail. JS, EI&EP and Chairman, APEDA expressed their reservations and opposed the EIC entering in this area. Director, EIC explained that the Scheme had been developed based on the decision taken in the MOC&I at a meeting chaired by Additional Secretary and where EP (Agri) and EI&EP Divisions as well as representatives from Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Ministry of Agriculture, APEDA and EIC were present. The Scheme envisaged a role for EIC as a Central Co-ordinating Authority to ensure uniformity of implementation by all four certifying Agencies as well as co-ordinating the certification activity. It was also clarified that registration by APEDA was mandatory prior to certification and the aim was not to reduce the role of APEDA, but to strengthen the certification component of the certifying Agencies. The other Council members felt that there is a definite need to have a central monitoring authority in the country in this area so that there is an effective coordination with the certifying bodies in India and with importing countries. After detailed deliberations, the Council decided that since this issue was examined by EIC at the instance of EP (Agri) Division of MOC&I, the issue may also be referred to them for their further advice on the matter.

3.2.2 *Voluntary Certification of Toor Dal*

It was decided by the Council that EIC may continue with certification of Toor Dal being exported from India to various countries on voluntary basis as well as working out equivalence requirement with Japan for accepting its certification as proposed in the Agenda. However, with regard to mandatory certification, it was decided that Director, EIC and Chairman, APEDA together may hold discussions with other stakeholders in this area to assess whether certification needs to be made mandatory and then recommend future course of action to the Ministry.

Item 3.3 Data base on the requirement of the importing countries

The Council, after further discussions, accepted the proposal made in the Agenda Item 3.3 and desired that a portal be developed by EIC to keep track of quality requirements of certain major importing countries on a continuous and dynamic basis. The Council also desired that the portal should provide linkages with similar sites of other organisations like BIS, APEDA as well as other countries. It also decided that all data and information on this site should be backed by officially authenticated documents.

Item 3.4 Special Recruitment Drive to fill backlog vacancies reserved for SCs & STs.

Item 3.5 Implementation of RTI Act-2005

The Council noted the contents of the item.

Item 3.6 Transfer of assets from EIC to EIAs

The Council approved the proposal contained under Agenda Item 3.6 to transfer the assets acquired out of plan funds to the concerned EIAs assets registers where these items are physically located.

Item 3.7 Delegation of powers for opening/closing/operating Bank Accounts to Director (I&QC)

The Council agreed to the proposal given under Item 3.7 of the Agenda and delegated the powers vested with the Council in terms of Rule 14(2) of Export (Quality Control & Inspection) Rules, 1964 to operate EIC's accounts to Director (I&QC).

Item 3.8 Budget Estimate 2005-2006, Revised Estimate 2005-2006 and Budget Estimate 2006-2007 of Export Inspection Agencies and Export Inspection Council

The Council approved the Budget and Revised Estimate 2005-2006 and Budget Estimate 2006-2007 of Export Inspection Council as placed in the Agenda.

Item 3.9 Status of Statutory Funds of EIC/EIAs

The Council expressed its concern over the management of Pension and Provident Fund Accounts both under Contributory and General Provident Fund Accounts being operated and maintained by EIC. Members expressed that it needs to be looked into by some professional Group / Agency as adequate expertise in this regard is not available with EIC. Council decided that a detailed proposal may be brought before it in this regard for further discussions in the next Council meeting to be held on 6th February 2006.

Item 3.10 Appointment of Public Relation Consultant for EIC

The Council while noting the appointments of PR consultant for EIC and approving the budget, expressed that the PR exercise, in addition to building a positive image for EIC, needs to also focus on aspects which would lead to inspiring confidence in the importing countries and the importers about the certification activity performed by EIC. The PR Agency may develop campaigns to liaison with Indian Embassies and also with major trading partners so that the brand image of Indian produce can be developed and projected abroad more effectively.

The Council also felt that more effective presentations by EIC are required to be made in the important trade fairs where the organization would get a better chance to interact and project its activities to a large group of importers at one place. Some of the fairs identified were the Boston and Brussels fair in addition to the Seafood Show in Kolkata scheduled for early February 2006.

It was also decided to organise a presentation by the PR Agency in the next meeting.

Item 3.11 Professional Analysis of the activities of EIC and EIAs.

A detailed presentation was made by M/s.A.F.Ferguson & Co. before the Council Members. After detailed deliberations it was decided that M/s.A.F.Ferguson & Co. would need to address the following issues:

1. Contact key players such as SEAI and take their views into consideration, while finalising their recommendations.
2. Carry out an analysis of best practices being followed by similar certifying bodies operating at international levels, and based on this, address the issue of upgrading capabilities/capacities.

It was further decided that once these aspects were addressed, a detailed Presentation to be made to the Council.

ITEM 4 ITEMS FOR RATIFICATION BY COUNCIL

Item 4.1 Implementation of Assured Career Progression Scheme (ACPS) to the employees of EIC/EIAs appointed from Group 'D' to Group 'C' post;

The Council ratified the decision to consider employees of EIC/EIAs, who were appointed from Group 'D' to Group 'C' post, as direct recruits for the purpose of ACP benefits in line with clarification No.8 of DOP&T.

Item 4.2 Regularisation of the service of the employees continuing on adhoc basis for the last 15-20 years.

It was expressed that the title of the Agenda Item 4.3 was misleading and that no regularisation of services of the employees who have continued on adhoc basis had been done but only ACP benefits have been granted to such employees in terms of laid down rules with the approval of Chairman, EIC.

Council ratified the decision.

Item 4.3 Shifting of EIC Accounts from State Bank of India East Patel Nagar New Delhi to Corporate and Institutions Branch, Parliament Street New Delhi

Shifting of accounts of EIC to from SBI, Patel Nagar to SBI branch at Parliament Street was ratified by the Council.

Item 4.4 Closure of Sub Offices of EIAs

Decision to close the sub-offices at Karwar, Jamnagar and Giridih was ratified by the Council.

ITEM 5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OF COUNCIL

Item 5.1 to 5.15 The Council noted the information given under Items No.5.1 to 5.15 of the Agenda.

Date and place for next meeting

It was decided to have the next meeting of the Council on 06 February 2006 at Delhi.

There being no other business, the meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE NINETY EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EXPORT INSPECTION COUNCIL HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2006

1. Shri MVPC Sastry, Joint Secretary (Incharge Export Inspection), Min. of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India, New Delhi
2. Shri K.S.Money, Chairman APEDA, New Delhi
3. Shri Elias Sait, M/s.Alsa Marine & Harvests Ltd., AF-54, 11th Main Road, Anna Nagar, Chennai.
4. Shri S.U.M Rao, Director General, National Test House, Kolkata.
5. Shri Rajesh Bhushan, Director(IH, Food & Drugs),Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, New Delhi
6. Dr. A.K. Verma, Assistant Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Government of India, New Delhi.
7. Shri S.K. Chaudhuri, DDG, BIS, New Delhi
8. Shri S.K. Bhalla, M/s.Gujarat Co-operative, Milk Marketing Federation Ltd., Amul Dairy Road, Anand (Gujarat).
9. Shri Rajesh Bahl, M/s Geo Chem Laboratories Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai.