

(1) In a Joint/Inter Departmental Inquiry, the senior most Officer in the highest grade among those nominated for the enquiry will act as president of enquiry committee. Seniority in the same grade among Officers belonging to different departments being reckoned on the total length of service and among officers of the same department, from the date of appointment to the grade.

(2) At a Senior Supervisors Inquiry, the senior most subordinate in the highest grade among those present at the inquiry will preside, seniority as between Sub-ordinates belonging to different departments in the same grade being reckoned on the total length of service, and as between subordinates belonging to the same department, the respective seniority in the Department.

**914 Officers' duties in connection with Inquiry:** Whenever an inquiry has been ordered, it will be the duty of the Divisional Officer of each department to advise all persons concerned under his charge or any other witnesses whom the committee may require to give evidence to be present at the place and on the date and time fixed for the inquiry. He will also be responsible for seeing that all documents necessary for conducting the inquiry are available and any other information required is readily produced. Inquiry Committee should take care not to call unnecessary witnesses.

**915 Failure to attend Inquiry:**

If a member of the Inquiry Committee fails to attend the inquiry due to any reason, he shall submit his written explanation to the President of the Inquiry Committee. When an Officer or a Subordinate is unable to attend an inquiry at which his presence is essential on account of the technical knowledge or knowledge of other facts which he possesses and it is not desirable to postpone the inquiry, an Officer or a Subordinate Officer of similar standing should, if possible, represent him and the Divisional Officer or Head of the Department, as the case may be, must be approached in order that this may be arranged. Witnesses who are summoned to inquiry and fail to appear must similarly explain the absence. If an officer/ staff, who has been summoned to depose before the committee absents himself without proper and sufficient reason, should be taken up under DA R.

**916 Postponing of an Inquiry:** An inquiry will not ordinarily be postponed due to the absence of a witness, but if after recording all other evidences, a decision cannot be arrived at, the inquiry may be adjourned till the witness is available. In case of a witness being sick, the President of the inquiry committee will advise the medical authorities to instruct the witness to attend the inquiry and if the witness is unable to attend himself, he may depute a representative to record his evidence, subject to the concurrence of the Medical Officer.

**917 Guidelines for the members of Inquiry Committee:** Following are a few guidelines for the members of inquiry committee —

- a) Strict impartiality must be observed by all members of the committee.
- b) Findings shall be drawn unanimously and as far as possible dissent note should not be given.
- c) Different technical data as well as evidence bearing on the accident have to be collected and an attempt should be made to reconstruct the sequence of events leading to the accident.
- d) Unless the cause of accident is evident, each of the factors that could result in the accident should be examined and its contribution, if any, assessed.
- e) In case of contradictory evidence, the value of such evidence should be discussed giving reasons why a particular version is given credit, another version is discounted.