



Government of India
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F.No.40/BVS/DGHRD(HRM-I)/SPARROW-IRS/2020

Dated: 11.05.2020

To

Pr. Chief Commissioner/ Chief Commissioner, Customs and GST (All),
Pr. Director General/ Director General (All),
Pr. Commissioner/ Pr. ADG/ Commissioner/ ADG, Customs and GST (All),
Chief Controller of Factories/ Narcotics Commissioner, Gwalior,
Commissioner (Coordination-I/II), CBIC, New Delhi,
Deputy Secretary, Ad.II, CBIC, New Delhi.

Sir/Madam,

Subject: Online writing of APAR in SPARROW-IRS for IRS (C&CE) Officers for year 2019-20-reg.

Please refer to this office letter F. No- 28/1/BVS/HRD(HRM)/APAR/2017 dated 16.02.2017, wherein detailed instructions have been issued for online writing of APARs in SPARROW-IRS i.r.o. IRS (C&CE) officers.

2. SPARROW-IRS has been successfully implemented w.e.f. APAR Cycle 2016-17. To facilitate its smoother implementation for APAR Cycle 2019-20, the following points may kindly be noted for compliance:

UPDATION OF NAME/ ROLE OF CUSTODIAN, ALTERNATE CUSTODIAN AND PAR MANAGER:

- (i) Updation of name/ role of Custodian, Alternate Custodian and PAR Manager of all the formations in SPARROW-IRS is an essential prerequisite for initiating online writing of APAR.
- (ii) The lists of all the formations in SPARROW (for the purpose of online Performance Appraisal Reporting) and the respective Custodian and Alternate Custodian as on 08.05.2020 is available on DGHRD website at HRM 1 ► SPARROW ► Online writing of APARs. It is requested to examine the list and where any change is necessitated, Group 'A' IRS(C&CE) Officers may be nominated for the roles of Custodian, Alternate Custodian and PAR Manager, on priority. It should be ensured that any such officer nominated for the role of Custodian/ Alternate Custodian/ PAR Manager has at least over one year of service left so as to enable completion of full APAR Cycle 2019-20.
- (iii) In this regard, kindly also refer to this office letter F.No.79/BVS/HRM-I/SPARROW/2019 dated 02.03.2020 (available in DGHRD website).

- (iv) Since the role of Custodian/ Alternate Custodian/ PAR Manager is critical for successful completion of APAR cycle, hence the Custodian/ Alternate Custodian/ PAR Manager should be well conversant with the Computer/IT Systems/ Tech-savvy.
- (v) The details in respect of all officers nominated for above mentioned roles may be immediately filled in “**CBIC SPARROW Seva**” utility on DGHRD Website by the present Custodian/ Alternate Custodian. This may be done on priority, if not done already, so that the APARs can be generated/ created smoothly in SPARROW-IRS. To access SPARROW Seva utility, please refer DGHRD F.No. 138/BVS/HRM-I/SPARROW/Misc/2019 dtd. 30.04.2020 (available in DGHRD website).

LOGGING INTO SPARROW-IRS:


There are two ways to login into the SPARROW-IRS portal.

- (a) The first option is to type url “**sparrow-irs.eoffice.gov.in**” in address bar available at the top of the browser and press enter. You will have the screen wherein you have to enter your credentials (NIC/GOV.IN ID and Password). Please do not search words like SPARROW IRS in search engines of browsers as results which browser will give have links of SPARROW portals of other departments. **Do not also use “www.sparrow-irs.eoffice.gov.in”.**
- (b) The other option is to visit DGHRD-CBIC website “www.dghrdcbic.gov.in”. On right side of home page of DGHRD website, you will see “SPARROW-IRS” tab; click on this tab, it will redirect you to SPARROW-IRS portal wherein you need to enter your login credentials.
- (c) Username and password for SPARROW-IRS will be same as that of nic/gov.in id. If you have forgot your password, please go to “eoffice.gov.in”, where there is forgot password link; the same can be used to reset the password.
- (d) **It may be noted that all the Group ‘A’ IRS (C&CE) Officers have a separate account for SPARROW-CBIC (in addition to their account in SPARROW-IRS). For any work related to SPARROW-CBIC, they will have to login into the SPARROW-CBIC account separately (through the login procedure of SPARROW-CBIC).**

3. APAR Timelines for 2019-20 as extended by DoPT vide OM No. 21011/02/2015-Est(A-II)-Part II dated 30.03.2020 have already been communicated vide DGHRD-CBIC letter F.No.21/BVS/HRD(HRM-I)/SPARROW-CBIC/2020 dated 30.03.2020 (available in DGHRD Website). In addition to reiterating the timelines, the following are instructions for strict compliance for the APAR Cycle 2019-20 in SPARROW-IRS:

- i) The Administration/Establishment Section of each formation (Zone/Commissionerate/Directorate) shall furnish the complete details as required in Section-I of the APAR duly verified by **15th May, 2020** to the PAR Manager and Custodian. Special care should be taken to ensure the correctness of the names & period of supervision by each of the Reporting & Reviewing officer and that these details are covering complete period from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020. The correctness and completeness of this information is essential to decide creation of APAR/ NRC by the PAR Manager and Custodian. These details are to be filled in respect of all the Group A officers of IRS (C&CE) who are working in a particular formation as on date including for the officers who have gone on Long Leave / Training / Foreign Assignment from that formation.

- ii) Based on the details submitted by the Administration Section, the PAR Manager shall ensure to create the workflow of all the Group 'A' officers of IRS(C&CE) after logging into the SPARROW-IRS not later than **20th May,2020**. It is also clarified that he has to create the workflow in respect of all the Group A officers working under his formation including the officers on Long leave/Training /Foreign Assignment. However, in case of Long leave/Training /Foreign Assignment, invariably the appropriate workflow for NRC/ Foreign Assignment Note is to be created.
- iii) While creating workflow for APAR, three crucial things that need to be filled in are - Assessment period (specific period for which APAR is being created), Form type and Status (APAR/NRC/Foreign Assignment). For creation of workflow for part period PAR, it should be kept in mind that period of Workflow under the heading assessment period selected by PAR Manager should be specific to that part period only (Exact dates). If this is not done, PAR/NRC for the uncovered subsequent period cannot be generated.
- For example: In case an Officer has two-part period APARs (from 1 April to 31 August and 1 September to 31 March) which need to be written for a particular year cycle due to change in reporting Officer in between the year. In this case, when PAR Manager creates workflow for the first part period APAR, period of which is from 1 April to 31 August, he/she should select "From" date as 1 April and "To" date as 31 August from the calendar available under the heading assessment period. For the second part period APAR, "From" date will be 1 September and "To" date 31 March.*
- iv) The workflows created by the PAR Manager will be automatically available with the Custodian. The Custodian should carefully examine if the Workflow created for APAR/NRC/Foreign Assignment is correct based on details given by Administration Section and if Workflow needs amendment, he should delete the Workflow and create the new Workflow. The Custodian should complete all the details in Section-I latest by **25th May,2020** and save it. Care should be taken in filling the name & correct period of supervision by Reporting & Reviewing officers in the table pertaining to details of the Reporting/Reviewing officers. The Custodian should complete Section-I in respect of all the Group A officers of IRS (C&CE) in his formation and save it latest by **25th May,2020** so that the APAR can be generated and sent to the Officers Reported Upon electronically after e-signing on well before **31st May,2020** (or as early as possible).
- v) It will be the responsibility of the Custodian to ensure that the PAR is generated electronically in respect of all the Group A officers of IRS (C&CE) who are working in his formation as on date including for the officers who have gone on Long Leave/ Training / Foreign Assignment from that formation.
- vi) The PAR generated shall be available in the inbox of the Officer Reported Upon. He/she should complete the Self-Appraisal in Section-II in all respects and forward the same to the Reporting officer after e-signing by 30th June,2020. In case, the officer does not forward his/her APAR timely, it will be force forwarded electronically to the Reporting Officer for appraisal without resume/ self-appraisal.

- vii) The Reporting Officer shall appraise the officer reported upon in Section III of APAR, complete in all aspects and forward the APAR to the Reviewing Officer after e-signing by 31st July,2020 positively. In case, the Reporting Officer does not forward the APAR timely to Reviewing Officer, it will be force forwarded electronically to the Reviewing Officer for appraisal.
- viii) The Reviewing Officer shall appraise the officer reported upon in Section III of APAR for numerical grading (against each individual attribute-wise and overall gradings), and complete Section IV in all respects and forward the APAR to the Custodian after e-signing by 31st August,2020 positively. In case, the Reviewing Officer does not appraise the APAR timely, he/she will forfeit right to review and the APAR shall be force forwarded in system from Reviewing Authority to the Custodian (CR Section) for disclosure to the concerned officer (Officer Reported Upon).
- ix) The Custodian shall disclose the completed APAR to the Officer Reported Upon latest by 10th September,2020 electronically. The officer reported upon may view the APAR and may either accept it or choose to represent. If the Officer reported upon accepts the APAR, then he will accept the same in the system and then the APAR will once again go back to Custodian (CR Section) for Closure; the Custodian shall finally close the APAR and thereby the APAR would attain finality. If the officer does not accept the APAR, he can represent online along with any reference document in support of his representation to the Competent Authority (as discussed in next paragraph), within 15 days of communication in 'MY PAR' Tab. It may be noted by all Officers/ Custodians that it is mandatory to complete requisite action on their part in SPARROW w.r.t. disclosure/ acceptance/ representation of APAR and APAR cannot be kept pending without requisite action in time, as prescribed. Any deviation may be viewed seriously.
- x) It may be noted that for the purpose of workflow of Representation (in PAR workflow), the Reporting Officer and Reviewing Officer will be the same as already selected in Standard PAR Workflow and the DGHRD Nodal Officer (Shri Vishnu Kumar, Additional Director, HRM-I, DGHRD, Emp ID: 3284) shall be selected/ mapped as both the "Competent Authority Stage-I" as well as "Competent Authority Stage-II".
- xi) **Selecting the Access Privileges:** While creating Workflow of APAR, PAR Manager/ Custodian should select/ highlight the  **Upload** icon against "**Competent Authority- Stage I**" and "**Competent Authority- Stage II**" tabs under the Access Privileges tab in **REPRESENTATION**.
- xii) **Skip Review:** For a PAR, there may be a situation where single reporting officer is there for 90 days or more for reporting but, there is no Reviewing Authority who has supervised the officer for a minimum period of 90 days so as to review the said APAR or where reviewing authority has expired. In such cases, the PAR Manager/ Custodian has to select/ highlight the **SKIP** icon against "**Reviewing Authority**" tab under the Access Privileges in **STANDARD** section of Workflow (As a result, the said APAR after being reported by Reporting Officer will not go to the queue/ account of Reviewing Authority & instead it will move directly to the queue of Custodian). After clicking on **SKIP** icon, a pop-up window will open where PAR Manager/ Custodian has to mention proper reasons for skipping the Reviewing Authority. The reason must inter-alia, contain: Name and Period

under the reviewing officer (s) during the said period. However, even while selecting skip review option, name of reviewing officer has to be given in Reviewing Authority column/ tab. If there are more than one reviewing authority, then, name of one with longest tenure may be given; the name(s) of other reviewing authorities and their respective periods may be mentioned in the reason pop-up box.

APAR REPRESENTATIONS:

4. **Beginning with APAR Cycle 2019-20, the APAR representations will be fully processed online including inviting and receipt of comments thereon from the Reporting/ Reviewing Authority.** Hence comments of the reporting and reviewing officers on the representation will be taken electronically only in SPARROW and the process would be as follows:

- (a) While creating workflow for APAR in the Representation Section for all Group 'A' IRS (C & CE Officers), the PAR Manager/Custodian should fill the name of Sh. Vishnu Kumar, Additional Director, DGHRD (Employee Code- 3284) in the "Competent Authority- Stage-I" and "Competent Authority- Stage- II" fields. Shri Vishnu Kumar is the Nodal Officer for all APAR reorientations of Group 'A' IRS (C & CE Officers).
- (b) PAR Manager/ Custodian have to mention the same names of reporting and reviewing officers respectively in representation section, as the ones in Standard Workflow part of APAR.
- (c) Nothing is to be filled anywhere else e.g. in "Referral Board" section and in "Memorandum".
- (d) The representation shall be submitted by the officer to the Custodian who will then forward it to the **"Competent Authority Stage-I" (DGHRD Nodal Officer Shri Vishnu Kumar, Addl. Director, DGHRD, Emp ID: 3284, who should have already been mapped while creating the Workflow)**, electronically latest by **30th September, 2020** for disposal of representation.
- (e) Online comments will be obtained from Reporting and/or Reviewing Authority by the DGHRD Nodal Officer before forwarding/ submitting the representation to the APAR Referral Board for consideration/ decision.
- (f) The Reporting Authority shall offer his/her comments on the APAR representation within 15 days and send the same online to the Reviewing Authority for his comments. The Reviewing Authority shall offer his/her comments within 15 days of such receipt from Reporting officer and send the same online to the **"Competent Authority Stage-II"**.
- (g) The Referral Board shall dispose of the representation and the Nodal Officer of DGHRD shall upload the referral order in SPARROW-IRS, which will then be communicated/disclosed in the system to the officer concerned by the Custodian (CR Section to Close). Upon this disclosure of order on his representation, **the Officer Reported Upon has to necessarily accept the APAR at this stage.** After acceptance, the APAR will once again go back to Custodian (CR Section) for Closure; the Custodian shall finally close the APAR and thereafter the APAR would attain finality (and the APAR would become available/ visible in the system). **Please note that the completed APAR shall become visible/ available in system only after final closure of APAR in system by the Custodian (CR Section).**

- (h) It is important that representations (if any) are submitted in prescribed time limit by the concerned officer and comments thereon are furnished by the Reporting/ Reviewing Authority (in online mode) within the stipulated time, so that the APAR process can be completed within the timelines prescribed by the DoPT. As per DoPT instructions, APAR representations are to be disposed of within one month from the date of receipt of the representation.
- (i) It may be further noted that as per DoPT instructions, representations can be submitted only for Gradings/ Comments/ Remarks.
- (j) Since APAR representations will be fully online in SPARROW system, no manual letters/ representations/ comments may be submitted.

5. For Officers working on Deputation, whether within or outside the department, it is the responsibility of the said Deputationist Organization to initiate/ get the APAR written/ completed (all actions/ steps of APAR process). The concerned APAR authority/ Branch of the Deputationist Organization may be consulted (where the Officer has been deputed) if the online APAR is to be initiated in SPARROW-IRS. It may be noted that the APAR workflow/ APAR in such case shall be initiated/ got completed by the concerned Deputationist Organization. For this purpose, the officers of Deputationist Organization may be given Custodian role etc in SPARROW-IRS (if not already assigned), on specific request by such organisation to the Additional Director (SPARROW), HRM-I, DGHRD. However, it is necessary in such cases that the concerned reporting/ reviewing/ representation authority (of the Deputationist Organization) are available/ mapped in any SPARROW.

6. For Officers working on loan basis in some other Formation, the Custodian of the Formation where officer is presently working on loan basis may initiate the APAR in SPARROW-IRS. However, the APAR can also be generated by the parent formation as well.

5. It is emphasised that APAR attains finality only after the APAR has been finally closed by the Custodian (CR Section) after acceptance of the APAR by the Officer Reported Upon and disposal of the APAR representation (if any) and the same having been disclosed. It is the duty of all concerned- Officer reported Upon, Reporting Officer, Reviewing Officer, and Custodian/ Alternate Custodian/ PAR Manager – to take all requisite actions w.r.t. APAR Cycle as per the timeline prescribed. Any deviation may be viewed seriously.

6. As per DoPT OM No.21011/02/2015-Est(A-II)-Part-II dated 30.03.2020 (as communicated vide DGHRD letter F. No.21/BVS/HRD(HRM-1)/SPARROW-CBIC/2020 dated:30.03.202), the extended APAR timelines for 2019-20 shall also apply to the reporting/ reviewing authorities, who have demitted office or retired from service on or after 29.02.2020. They shall be allowed to record their remarks till the respective extended cut-off dates, even beyond one month of retirement/ demitting office.

7. Help Manuals in the form of step by step guide for different roles as Custodian, PAR Manager, Officer Reported Upon, Reporting Officer and Reviewing Officer have been uploaded on the homepage of DGHRD website (dghrdcbic.gov.in)([HRM 1 ► SPARROW ► SPARROW help manual](#)), which may be referred to.

8. In each CCO/ Commissionerate/ Directorate HQ/ Directorate Zonal Unit, an Officer of JC/ ADC level should be nominated as “Officer In-charge (SPARROW)”. He/she will be responsible for

the overall supervision of the functioning of both SPARROW systems (i.e., SPARROW-IRS and SPARROW-CBIC in that formation), as well as for ensuring completion of all APAR related actions/ process in time and properly. The "Officer In-charge (SPARROW)" should ensure that all the Concerned Custodians & Alternate Custodians and Individual Officers under them, have ensured the required action at their end as per the timelines. Further, that the concerned Reporting/Reviewing Officers are writing the APARs as per timelines prescribed.

NO REPORT CERTIFICATE (NRC)

9. For No Report Certificate (NRC), the following may be noted:

- (a) While creating workflow for NRC for the Officers of the rank of Commissioner and above, PAR Manager/ Custodian needs to fill the name of Sh. Neeraj Babu Jain, Assistant Director, DGHRD (Employee Code- 8852) in the "Competent Authority" field (Sh. Neeraj Babu Jain, Assistant Director, DGHRD, HRM-I is the NRC Nodal Officer for the purpose).
- (b) In respect of NRC workflow of IRS (C&CE) officers below the rank of Commissioner, the "Competent Authority" may be selected as per DGHRD instructions on NRC issued vide F.No. 8/B/72//HRD (HRM)/2014 dated 03.09.2014 (available in DGHRD website). As per the said instructions, for AC/DC, the NRC Competent Authority is Commissioner/Pr. Commissioner/ ADG/ Pr.ADG (present jurisdiction) and for JC/ADC, it is the Chief Commissioner/ Pr. Chief Commissioner/ Pr. DG/ DG (present jurisdiction).
- (c) Officer In-charge (SPARROW)/ Custodians are expected to extend technical assistance to the concerned officers for processing of the NRC requests and regarding online comments on APAR representations.

10. In case of any problem being faced related to SPARROW/ APAR filing or for any role updation/mapping requests, the officers are requested to raise their issues through the "CBIC SPARROW Seva", an online utility launched recently to function as a single window for all such requests. (Please refer DGHRD letter F.No. 138/BVS/HRM-I/SPARROW/Misc/2019 dated 30.04.2020, available in DGHRD-CBIC website). As mentioned therein, the utility is both for SPARROW-IRS and SPARROW-CBIC. For any other issues, the SPARROW-IRS Helpdesk is available at 011-23741697 or 011-23741698.

11. Please note that completion of APARs as per timelines prescribed is not only mandatory but is a vital prerequisite for proper human resource management for the organisation. Apart from strictly adhering to the timelines, the APARs should also be written properly as per the instructions. There have been instances where many columns are not filled properly and gradings are given without proper justification. For example, while an officer has been awarded numerical grading equivalent to "Outstanding" but the Reporting/Reviewing officer has written just one small sentence in the pen picture about the officer. APARs must be written with due care and attention, keeping in mind APAR related instructions. Further, the details in Section-I needs to be filled properly and completely by the Custodian. The duration/period under the Reporting/Reviewing Officers as well as other details in Section-I needs to be filled completely and correctly.

12. All the Controlling Officers (Pr.CC/Pr. DG/ CC/ DG/ Pr. Commissioner/ Commissioners) may please ensure that all the Individual Officers/ Concerned Custodian/ Alternate Custodian& PAR Manager under them, have ensured the required action at their end as per the timelines and all concerned Reporting/Reviewing Officers are writing the APARs as per timelines prescribed.

13. Further, it is important that each and every officer's APAR covering the whole APAR year 2019-20 is completed and the period should be covered by APAR or NRC wherever applicable. As per DoPT instructions, the explanation of officers not Reporting/Reviewing the APARs of their subordinates in time needs to be called for by the Controlling officers. Therefore, the Officers who have not Reported/Reviewed the APARs of their subordinates for 2018-19, the same needs to be recorded in Section-II of 2019-20 APAR in terms of DoPT instructions.


14. For APAR cycle 2019-20, DoPT vide OM No. 21011/01/2009-Est(A)-Part dated 09 March 2020 has extended the timeline for submission of summary of the medical report for Group A officers to 30th June, 2020. Thus, as of now, the APARs 2019-20 may be generated in SPARROW without medical certificate/ summary. The medical certificate/summary report should be added to the APAR subsequently as per DoPT instructions/timeline issued in this regard. This can be done by the Custodian by updating Section I by mentioning the date and uploading the certificate/summary. In this regard, for Annual Medical Examination of Group A officers for 2019-20, DoPT instructions, as prescribed/ may be prescribed, should be followed.

15. Since the role of Custodian/ Alternate Custodian/ PAR Manager is critical for successful completion of APAR cycle, hence the Custodian/ Alternate Custodian/ PAR Manager should be well conversant with the Computer/ IT Systems/ tech-savvy. The role of PAR Manager can be skipped in small formations (where there is small no. of Group 'A' IRS(C&CE) officers) as the Custodian/ Alternate Custodian already have all the privileges of PAR Manager role.

16. Most importantly, it should be ensured that entire processes of APAR Cycle 2019-2020 - Reporting, Reviewing, Officer disclosure/Acceptance/representation, disposal of representation as per prescribed procedure is complete and final closure of APARs in the system is completed latest by **31st December, 2020.**

17. It is requested that these instructions may be brought to the notice of all Officers/Staff in your jurisdiction, for necessary action and strict compliance.

Yours faithfully,


- 11.5.2020

(Neeta Lall Butalia)

Director General, DGHRD

Copy to:

OSD/Sr.PPS to Chairman, CBIC& All Members, CBIC, North Block, New Delhi, for kind information please.