



CGDA Pointers

Hello everybody,

I bow before you, deeply touched and inspired by your generous words of congratulations and encouragement, which have come from all corners of our country-wide offices. With boundless gratitude for the confidence placed in me by the Government, and with an unswerving resolve to honour that trust, I humbly accept the appointment as the Fifty second Controller General Defence Accounts of this great Organization, our DAD. I wish to extend my deepest respect and appreciation to all the officers and staff of the Department for their strong support. I am honestly thrilled and genuinely honoured by the opportunity to head the Department in which I have served for more than 36 years. I see this very much as an opportunity to serve and to give back to DAD community that has given so much to me and my family.

The past year has been difficult for everyone, whether it be mentally, emotionally or physically. During these uncertain times, our officers/staff had to clock in the hours as essential workers. But we as a Department have persevered. As we reel from the impact of all those stresses, I urge you to gather your strength and compassion to move forward. Let us all come together and work towards achieving our goals in the coming year.

On an everyday basis, it isn't only the dedication and due-diligence of high-ranking officers that attains results, but also that of junior officers, training to be the future of this department and the staff, whose tireless hard work is the backbone of any well-functioning office. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for all your hard work, especially during the difficult year that has been due to Covid situation. You all went above and beyond your call of duty in these unprecedented times. The great work you have put in to ensure safe

working environment, vaccination drives for staff members, working at minimum capacity and all while juggling the duties of your job roles, has been incredible to say the least. It was a huge uplifting period to see the whole DAD fraternity coming together and help each other in trying times of the pandemic. My sincere and heart-felt condolences to the families of 76 DAD community, who lost their lives due to Covid. I have issued instructions to all Field offices to urgently nominate Nodal officers to directly assist families in expediting all terminal benefits.

Traditionally, our Department has never been at the public forefront. Some might credit this to our adopted notion that modesty is a virtue. This modest approach to our work does not insinuate lack of commitment or leadership. Rather, it means quiet determination to get things done without much fanfare. But we must ensure to not be modest in our planning, especially when setting our vision and goals for the future. Indeed, our organization practices moderation in its means, but not in its values. Humility will open more doors than arrogance ever will. The true measure of success for DAD is not how much we promise, but how much we deliver for those who need us most. Adhering to the inspiring constituent principles and fundamental purpose of our organization, we need not shout its praises or preach its virtues. We simply need to live them every day: step by step, program by program, mandate by mandate.

As the Head of DAD community, I would first like to say that I am heartened by the progress you all have made so far and am eager to help continue that progress. From what I have observed at our Hqs and Heads of field offices, I see teams consisting of individuals having strong opinions and divergent ones too. Let's remember that it's not a question of how well each process works; the question is how well they all work together. It matters that we are not only committed to a diverse and inclusive community, but that we demonstrate how and why diversity is a source of strength and vibrancy and need not be a source of division. It good to disagree with each other, but do so with mutual respect and civility. A boat doesn't go forward if each one is rowing their own way. And as Michael Jordan said, "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships."

That brings me to the important issue of fulfilling our mandate in the current fast-changing scenarios. The truth is that we need to change and adapt to the new developments. The hard part, which you are all facing now, is what to do in response to these novel innovations, both in the short term as well as longer term.

In an era where the world of Defence ecosystem itself is changing rapidly, it matters that we are brave enough to experiment with new ways of working and to change the very template of our functioning. In an era where there are serious doubts about the quality and availability of prompt and fair service providing, it matters that we offer high-quality customer service that is accessible to all our clients, be it organizations or individuals. In an era where there are increased expectations from institutions like IFA, Payment authority, it matters that we show what a well-functioning and equitable Service provider department looks like and that we demonstrate your value not only to our user services, but to the Ministry as well.

As many of you will soon come to know, I have many plans and ideas for the future of the Department. At the danger of sounding disrespectful to spell out priorities in detail without first spending time here and without speaking with everybody and getting a sense of their aspirations, I am daring to do so for a simple reason. For too long, we have been having lots of talks with not much of action. This procrastination is the biggest barrier to opportunity and success for the department. The words of Benjamin Franklin have never rung truer, "Never leave till tomorrow that which you can do today." This procrastination will not do for too much of it is at stake, even the very future of Department, if I may say. It means that we not simply understand and learn from our past, but that we also – and always – keep our eyes on the future, recognizing that it is ours to shape. And we need to move fast. There is no scope for delay as emerging circumstances require fast paced and highly effective service delivery.

Nevertheless, I concede that any vision for moving forward, in order to be compelling and workable, must be a shared vision. So let me put forth a summary of my vision and roadmap for next one year for every DAD member, though I have already shared this with my team at Hqs.

First and foremost, we need to do comprehensive Business Process Reengineering exercise of all processes/procedures being followed in department. Our Codes/Manuals have been written in a language, which is not only archaic and difficult to comprehend, but have also ended up in making simple activities look complex. Several activities have already become outdated but still find place there. We need to take a hard look there and ponder as to why we have made our own lives difficult by making things complex. So, we will start by completely re-writing them in a way, which will be easily understood even by a lay person. Also, it will only contain the essentials required for performing a specific job, instead of cluttering with non-essentials and theoretical issues.

Coming to specifics, let's start with reforms in very manner in which we manage our people. Archaic terms like "administration", meaning to enforce rules and regulations, owing to its British legacy, have lost meaning and value with these changing times. The modern organisations have developed separate wings for running the offices and development of Human Resources and the emphasis is on "Development" of people rather than 'Administering' them. The same culture needs to be brought in DAD also. Apart from changing the nomenclature, let's us devise ways and means to change the very psyche of what 'Administration' in DAD connotes and make it an enabling tool for 'how to make people happy' rather than 'how to make them unhappy'. Instead of merely asking our non-Admin sections to give better results, why not ask them what they need in order to do their best and provide them with that support. Satisfied employees will inevitably yield higher outputs.

Delinking of Payment function with Audit of sanction is one area, which needs to be implemented forthwith, as our existing practice of combining the two activities has been a major source of complaints both from Users and Sellers. Another innovation in Payment could be a lesson from Income Tax Department, which has successfully implemented the anonymity feature in their core functions. We need to adopt the same model to get rid of 'sensitive posting' syndrome in department.

In Accounting, we continue with several archaic features, Defence Exchange Accounting system being primary example. The utility of this system needs to be questioned in the present context, where DAD filed offices do not fulfil the criteria of being a full-fledged Accounting Circle and where centralized payment system makes this system seemingly redundant. Other areas could be linking of cheques/MROs, Schedule-III mechanism, Settlement Accounting system, etc.

In area of Local Audit, which essentially revolves around Stores Accounting Audit and Cash Audit, considering the fact that almost all Users have developed their own ERP system in their Materials Management System, pressure has come on DAD to perform these twin functions of Local Audit through their automation system, and rightly so. We can think of centralising the Automated Local Audit so that more effective audit can be done by developing centralised Audit themes, getting rid of all kinds of Audit arrears/reconciliations and simultaneously facilitating more optimum utilisation of manpower presently deployed for Local Audit.

In IFA system, we must ensure implementation of e-concurrence among the various users in order to bring more transparency, faster

processing and obviating the need for physical posting of IFAs in difficult areas. Several users have initiated already different modules for this purpose and we should attempt to synchronize and synergize these initiatives so that DAD follows a common e-Concurrence module for IFA system.

The IT roadmap of DAD is the backbone of our road to significant quality upgradation. Two of our flagship IT projects are SPARSH (Pension cases) and PRABAL (Payment & Accounting system). SPARSH is already in advanced stage of implementation and we should be fiercely proud of its Implementation team, having members of PCDA (Pension) and Pension/IT wing in Hqrs. PRABAL is also proceeding well now. However, we need to cover all aspects of DAD functioning through IT automation.

Let's start with complete switch-over to e-Office in whole DAD from 1st October (DAD day). That itself will be a major achievement. But we won't stop at that. A comprehensive HRMS package for DAD covering personnel matters, pay and allowances, personal claims, grievances/complaints, etc. ought to be implemented within this calendar year, which will bring transparency, fairness and promptness in DAD Administration. We could also think of having Centralized Pay System for covering Pay & Allowances and Personal claims of all our users, which will be a game-changer for them just like SPARSH has been for their Pension claims. I have already touched the other IT areas related to Automated Local Audit and e-Concurrence. So let's put our mind to these IT initiatives and implement them fast in time-bound manner, thus being in complete sync of Government initiative of Digital India.

Let me end by making two promises that I know I can keep. The first is that, when I begin and throughout my time here, I will ask a lot of questions. Some of them, undoubtedly, will be annoying. But I promise that I will carefully listen to your answers. I will listen attentively to your concerns, expectations and even admonitions. The second is that, I promise that I will graciously accept your mistakes as well as own up to my own, albeit on following this maxim - "It's OK if you make mistakes from exuberance. But I will not tolerate mistakes from lethargy". I will praise not only results, but good effort. If you give your job your best effort with a good attitude, yet make a mistake, that is all right. I'll only ask that you learn from your mistake and not repeat it. We will be taking some prudent risks and mistakes will happen. The unpardonable sin will be not giving your work your best effort, not caring about the quality of your work, or not getting better as we strive to be the best we can be.

If you wake up in the morning and don't enjoy your work, you're not only doing your organisation a disservice but also yourself. So, let's be proactive rather than passive and not just think about final objective or

destination but also the road to that journey. We spend most of our waking hours at work or thinking about work. In all my experiences, I have learnt one thing. People rarely succeed unless they seek joy and have fun in what they do. And so, I hope to create a positive and open work environment, so that each of you enjoy coming to work every day. If we are going to be working hard, it better be fun and worthwhile. I would like to end with a quote from Mark Twain that says, "The secret of getting ahead is getting started." So, let's get started.

Here for you in the face of anything,



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