



सीमाशुल्क आयुक्त (सामान्य) का कार्यालय
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS (GENERAL)
सतर्कता अनुभाग, जवाहरलाल नेहरू सीमाशुल्क भवन,
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F.No. GEN/VIG/MISC/661/2026-VIG

Date: 16-09-2026

Standing Order No. 09/2026

Subject: Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Inquiry Officers (IOs) and Presenting Officers (POs) for expeditious conduct of disciplinary proceedings under Rule 14 of the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965 - reg.

In order to ensure fair, transparent and time-bound conduct of disciplinary inquiries and to minimise avoidable procedural delays, the following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) shall be followed by all Inquiry Officers (IOs) and Presenting Officers (POs) appointed in disciplinary proceedings under Rule 14 of the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965.

2. Inspection of Original Documents

2.1. In terms of Rule 14 of the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965, the Charged Officer (CO) shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to inspect documents relevant to the Articles of Charge and relied upon in the disciplinary proceedings.

2.2. To facilitate inspection of original records without causing avoidable delay, the details of the concerned officer of the Vigilance Section, along with those of the designated Link Officer, shall be provided along with the appointment order of the IO/PO.

2.3. The CO/Defence Assistant (DA) may inspect the original documents available with the Vigilance Section by giving at least one working day's advance intimation to the concerned officer/Link Officer. The official e-mail address and contact number of the concerned officer(s) shall be provided in the covering letter accompanying the chargesheet. The name and contact details of the Assistant/Deputy Commissioner of Vigilance Section shall also be provided, who may be contacted in the event the concerned officer/Link Officer is not reachable.

2.4. As reasonable opportunity for inspection of the original records has been provided, no adjournment/extension shall ordinarily be granted merely on the ground of non-supply of original documents by the Vigilance Section. The IO shall record the availability of such inspection facility in the Daily Order Sheet.

3. Time-bound Completion of Inquiry and Honorarium

3.1. In accordance with the instructions of the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) regarding expeditious finalisation of disciplinary proceedings, the IO and PO shall make all possible efforts to conclude the inquiry within **six months** from the date of their appointment.

3.2. Any request for extension beyond six months shall be made sufficiently in advance, clearly indicating the reasons for delay and the period required for completion. The IO shall also indicate whether the delay is attributable to the Department, IO, PO, CO/DA or circumstances beyond the control of the concerned parties.

3.3. The honorarium of IO and PO shall be regulated in accordance with DoPT OM No. 142/40/2015-AVD.I dated 16.11.2022 governing payment of honorarium for conducting departmental inquiries, presently providing for 15% and 10% of Basic Pay respectively, subject to the conditions prescribed therein.

3.4. For inquiries conducted under this SOP, the admissible honorarium shall, subject to the extant rules/instructions, be regulated as follows:

Period of completion	Honorarium
Within 6 months	100% of admissible amount
Beyond 6 months and up to 9 months	75% of admissible amount
Beyond 9 months and up to 12 months 50%	50% of admissible amount
Beyond 12 months	No honorarium shall ordinarily be considered

4. Conduct of Hearings through Video Conferencing

4.1. Since disciplinary inquiries are quasi-judicial proceedings, the principles of natural justice and reasonable opportunity to the CO shall be duly safeguarded in terms of Rule 14 of the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965.

4.2. In terms of para 10 of the DoPT OM No. 142/40/2015-AVD.I dated 16.11.2022 and subsequent instructions, the use of Video Conferencing (VC) should be utilized to the maximum extent possible in disciplinary proceedings and physical/personal appearance shall not be insisted upon as a matter of routine.

4.3. The IO may conduct hearings through VC wherever feasible, including hearings involving the PO, CO, DA and witnesses, particularly where the concerned persons are stationed at different locations.

4.4. The use of VC shall not prejudice the right of the CO to effectively participate in the inquiry, inspect documents, present the defence or examine/cross-examine witnesses in accordance with the applicable rules.

5. Requests for Additional/Unrelated Documents

5.1. The right of the CO to seek relevant documents under Rule 14 of the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965 shall be duly respected. However, such right shall extend to documents having a reasonable nexus with the Articles of Charge and necessary for preparation of the defence.

5.2. Requests for documents which are prima facie irrelevant, unrelated to the Articles of Charge or having no bearing on the issues under inquiry shall be considered by the IO and disposed of through a reasoned order.

5.3. Repeated requests for unrelated or irrelevant documents, particularly where such

requests have the effect of unnecessarily prolonging the inquiry, may be treated as avoidable delay attributable to the CO. Such instances shall be appropriately recorded in the Daily Order Sheet and, wherever warranted, brought to the notice of the Disciplinary Authority. The Disciplinary Authority may take cognizance of such conduct, in accordance with the applicable rules, while considering the overall conduct of the disciplinary proceedings and the reasons for delay.

5.4. Nothing contained herein shall restrict a legitimate request for documents relevant and necessary for an effective defence, which shall be considered objectively by the IO in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

6. Adjournments and Conduct of Proceedings

6.1. In keeping with the DoPT/CVC instructions regarding timely completion of disciplinary proceedings, adjournments shall not be granted as a matter of routine and shall be allowed only for sufficient and recorded reasons.

6.2. The IO shall maintain proper Daily Order Sheets indicating the proceedings conducted, adjournments granted and, wherever relevant, the party responsible for the resulting delay.

6.3. The next date of hearing shall, as far as practicable, be fixed before conclusion of the sitting.

6.4. The IO and PO shall make concerted efforts to avoid unnecessary adjournments and ensure timely production of documents and witnesses, while maintaining the fairness and impartiality required in quasi-judicial proceedings.

7. These instructions shall be read in conjunction with the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965, applicable DoPT instructions and CVC guidelines issued from time to time. In case of any inconsistency between this SOP and the statutory rules or binding instructions of the Government/competent authority, the latter shall prevail.

8. The above instructions shall come into force with immediate effect and shall apply to disciplinary inquiries conducted under Rule 14 of the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965 in the jurisdiction of Commissioner of Customs (General), JNCH.

Digitally signed by
UNMESH SHARAD WAGH
Date: 16-09-2026
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(Umesh Sharad Wagh)
Commissioner (NS-Gen)
Mumbai Customs Zone-II

1. The Chief Commissioner of Customs, Mumbai Customs Zone-II
2. All Principal Commissioners/ Commissioners of Mumbai Customs Zone - II.
3. All Additional/Joint Commissioner of Customs (NS-GEN, NS-I, NS-II, NS-III & NS-V) of Mumbai Customs zone - II.
4. All DC/AC of Groups and Sections Of Customs (NS-GEN, NS-I, NS-II, NS-III& NS-V) of Mumbai Customs zone -
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