

PREFACE

Life is an unending journey of discovery, but it need not necessarily be so while handling one's official business. A carefully documented procedural manual of all the main processes managed by an organisation could eliminate the element of surprise and uncertainty which one encounters when inducted into a new organisation or when there is a change of assignment in the same organisation.

All organisations, particularly government organisations, are understandably very busy managing the work allocated to them. In the course of this daily grind it is difficult to find time to look at the administration of various processes from the outside or to reflect internally on them. However, if certain critical processes have to be managed well and their quality has to be guaranteed in all situations, irrespective of the personnel entrusted with the tasks, a modicum of documentation is absolutely essential. As a matter of fact, process documentation is the first step in the journey of quality assurance leading to ISO quality certification.

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs handles several key processes relating to the management of government business in Parliament and issues pertaining to the welfare of Members of Parliament, among others. In the nature of things, these processes entail a zero-defect approach. The Handbook of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs has been designed with this end in view. The chapters in this book were identified in the context of the work allocated to the Ministry in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 (as amended up to 12/1/2004). The broad framework of each chapter comprises explaining the concerned task through a background note, listing out various components of the process and documenting the policy decisions taken from time to time with regard to that process. At the core of these chapters is a set of samples provided as annexes, which will facilitate speedy and efficient implementation of the processes. In most cases, a check list too has been included in order to achieve the objective of zero-defect.

The preparation of this Handbook, spread over several months on account of pressure of routine work during the Parliament sessions, has been a journey of introspection and self-discovery for all of us involved in this unique and exciting project. All the officials and staff members associated with the preparation of this Handbook have really looked within and taken time off to look at the processes from the outside in order to document, in the minutest of details, different aspects and dimensions of every process. I would, in particular, like to put on record my deep and abiding appreciation of the wholehearted commitment of Shri K.K. Thakur, Deputy Secretary to the project. Without his faith in the outcome of the project, it would have been a non-starter. He has been by far the key contributor to the text of the Handbook. My thanks are also due to all the other main contributors to the Handbook, namely, Shri Dhani Ram, Deputy Secretary; Smt. Santosh Prabha, Under Secretary; Shri Bhoj Raj, Under Secretary; Shri M. S. Chopra, Under Secretary; Smt. Rewa Rani, Under Secretary; Shri Joseph Zacharias, Section Officer; Smt. Suman Bara, Section Officer; Smt. Manorama Bhardwaj, Hindi Officer; and Shri P. Bepari, UDC. They all did an excellent job of developing the material and providing the inputs, beyond the call of normal duty. In the fitness of things, Shri P. Gopalakrishnan, Joint Secretary, a recent entrant to the family of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, put together the chapter on 'Ushering in a New Lok Sabha', which was not part of the original scheme of the Handbook. I am also grateful to all other officers and staff members of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, who contributed to the preparation of this Handbook in different ways.

I am also grateful to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and the Ministers of State in our Ministry, who have greatly appreciated and encouraged the preparation of this document. I am sure, this Handbook will serve as a beacon light for all those organisations in government which have to manage critical and specific processes within an inviolable time frame. I look forward to receiving valuable suggestions for further improvement of this pioneering initiative.

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V.K. Agnihotri
Secretary
Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs