

CHAPTER III

The Record Department

47. (I) (i) *Responsibilities and duties of Superintendent of Records (including Superintendents/S.O.s./Head of the Branches, for Record Sections in the Branches)*—The Superintendent of Records is responsible to the Under Secretary, Secretariat Establishment for the efficient working and maintenance of general discipline and order in the general record room placed under this charged. He is also responsible for the proper care of records and will give particular attention to the following points :—

- (a) the prompt restoration of recorded cases in the record bundles;
- (b) the avoidance of the restoration of papers inaccurately by restorers;
- (c) the non-removal of files from record bundles without proper marking as required by the instructions in paragraph 51 (I);
- (d) to render assistance in tracing papers when special difficulties arise. Requests for such assistance should be made through Superintendents/Head of the Branches.
- (e) Prompt disposal of requisition for papers.

(ii) The Superintendents/Heads of the Branches are entirely responsible for the proper care and maintenance of the record/dairy in the branches. They should, in particular, take the following steps to ensure efficiency and promptness in disposal of work in the record sections of the branches :—

- (a) The Superintendents/Heads of the Branches should acquaint himself with the state of work in the record section of the branches by obtaining the report every other day from each Record-Keeper as to the number of cases and fresh receipts over two days old which have not been attended to and the date of receipt of the oldest case. Immediate and urgent cases must be put up with the required papers on the same day as they are received in the record section of the branch;
- (b) the maintenance of the prescribed registers and note-books;
- (c) the strict compliance with the instructions in paragraphs 3 regarding reminder cases and the other instructions dealing with routine;
- (d) the proper maintenance of diaries and compliance with the instructions contained in paragraphs 64—66 and 67,
- (e) frequent inspection of Record Section of the Branch so as to ensure that the work is going on well and suitable arrangements are made

to avoid accumulation which should in no case be allowed to take place.

(2) The regular dusting and cleaning of the record almirah cannot be too strongly emphasised. The record-rooms have been supplied with restorers and fareshes and the Superintendent Records, should see that the file bundles are taken out frequently and dusted. He should also arrange with the caretaker for the record almirah and walls to be cleaned regularly with the vaccum cleaner. A preservative is in use for spraying the records in order to keep away fish insects and while ants. This preservative is a deadly poison. It is kept in the custody of the Superintendent Records, and should only be used his under personal supervision. He will be held responsible for any mishaps. On the appearances of any sign of rats, the Superintendent Records, should see that the rat traps in the record rooms are brought into use and should acquaint the caretaker and the Under Secretary, Secretariat Establishment of their activities so that special steps may be taken to get rid of them. A register should be maintained showing the dates and the sections of the record-rooms where the vacuum cleaner and the preservative have been used, and the register should be sent up to the Under Secretary Secretariat Establishment for his information.

48. *Arrangement of records* :—The old records of the Secretariat are kept in the record room shelves in monthly bundles in the chronological order of the proceeding numbers recorded during the month. The more recent records, recorded under the file system, are arranged according to sub-head annual file numbers in chronological order and kept in bundles of convenient size. Each bundle has a board in front on which the contents are noted. File numbers, when printed are posted on the bundles. The shelves containing these bundles are labelled outside showing the year of the records contained in them.

49. *Clauses of records to be deposited in the record-room* :—The records deposited to the record-rooms shelves consist of :—

(a) Series of recorded files comprising :—

(i) Collection of 'A' proceedings with spare copies;

(ii) Collection of 'B' files;

(iii) Collection of 'C' files.

(b) Spare copies of printed letters etc.

(c) Yearly and monthly volume of proceedings;

(d) Indexes to volumes of proceedings;

(e) Old Diaries;

(f) Disposed of confidential classes, to be kept under lock and key.

(g) Deeds of certain classes, to be kept in a Chubb's safe or locked almirah.

(h) Printed files.

50. (I) *Pending cases* :—All pending cases should be sent to the record room for entry in the pending register, whether the papers have been recorded or not.

(ii) *Restoration of cases* :—Cases received in the record-room in which no further action is required should be broken up and restored with the least possible delay, but before this is done, care should be taken to see that the backward and forward counter-mark commonly known as chaining is complete.

Requisition for Files

51. (i) Requisitions for files from record-room shelves. The shelves in the record rooms shall be kept under lock and key of the restorers. All requisitions for papers should be made to them and should indicate the dairy number for which the papers are needed. If there is no fresh receipt, the requisition should itself be diarised. The persons making the requisition should sign and date it clearly. Proceedings already put up with case shows not be recorded from it and be put up with another case without a note of the branch number of the case with which they are put up being left on the case from which they have been removed the marking in the bundle being changed accordingly.

All record-keepers and Assistants must strictly comply with this rule so as to obviate the difficulty that inevitably occurs in tracing papers if no note of their marking is made at the time of removal. Breaches of this rule will involve disciplinary action.

(2) *Requisition for the removal of files from one Branch to another* :—No record keeper of any Branch is permitted to remove a file belonging to another Branch without first obtaining the consent of the Superintendent of that branch. The latter before granting permission will satisfy himself that the file is not removed from its place in the record bundle without a proper marking slip.

As regards the removal of confidential files, the express permission of the Branch Superintendent must be taken and a formal receipt obtained before the file is handed over to the requisitioning authority.

These instructions do not relate to the removal of files belonging to any of the Branches in the Finance Department, as they are governed by separate orders.

(3) *Requisitions from and to the Secretariat for papers* :—(i) Requisitions from the Secretariat for papers belonging to any outside office should be made on the prescribed form signed by a Superintendent of the Branch. When a Clerk is sent to an office to obtain confidential or other papers urgently, he should take with him a requisition addressed to the head of the office and signed by an Under Secretary.

(ii) Requisitions from any outside office for papers or notes belonging to the Secretariat should on no account be complied with (except in the case of applications for additional copies of papers already supplied) without the permission of a Secretary or a Deputy Secretary or an Under Secretary.

(iii) Official Requisitions for papers from the Historic Record Office should be addressed to the Director of Archives.

(iv) Old records, including Jagir and other statements are lent from the Civil Secretariat to the Financial Commissioner Office and by the Financial Commissioner's office to the Civil Secretariat on requisition signed by the Superintendents of branches. Registers of papers so lent should be maintained in both offices, and receipts should be taken for every paper given out or returned.

52. *Destruction and Preservation of Records*.—(1) The object of destroying papers is to lighten files and provide space in the shelves of the record almirahs. The originals of A cases and those of B cases when printed, should be preserved, if they are of an important nature and likely to be of value i.e. for historical or legal purposes, in the future. When, however, the originals are clearly of ephemeral interest only they should be destroyed. In doubtful cases of the orders of Under/Deputy Secretary or Secretary should be taken as to the importances of the papers. One collection copy should be marked with the letter 'O' (Original) and placed in the original cover along with any manuscript documents to be preserved :

(2) The originals of the undermentioned classes of documents always be preserved :—

- (a) Legal documents or documents of legal value;
- (b) Minutes of the Governor and Ministers or manuscripts of notes by them an important matters that make history;
- (c) Notes recorded on important files which have been circulated to Ministers;
- (d) Treaties, agreements and such like documents;
- (e) Important letters from Private individuals, etc.
- (f) Maps, sketches and similar Papers not reproduced in collection copies; and
- (g) Final proofs of drafts bearing the initials of the Governor or a Minister, or proof which varies the orders passed in the notes or has on it any remarks explanatory of alternations and additions.

(3) Ordinarily the following papers may be destroyed after the orders of the Superintendents/Heads of the branches concerned have been obtained :—

- (a) Unimportant manuscripts and proofs of Offices notes after fair printed copies have been supplied;
- (b) Spare copies of any printed letters received from the Government of India after all requirements have been considered and at least five copies have been retained;
- (c) The papers in death cases after final action has been taken, except in cases in which two or more Criminals have been convicted and a sentence of transportation has been passed;

- (d) Manuscript and proofs of the annual administration report after the volume has been passed out of the Press and distributed; and
- (e) 'C' Proceedings after two years, provided that they contain no orders of an important or of a permanent character.

(4) With a view to facilitating the work of weeding the records periodically, the Superintendents should clearly indicate, on the form on which he passes orders, the papers that should be preserved and those that should be destroyed at once or after a period of two years. Whenever all the papers in a collection are destroyed the cover of the collection should be kept in its proper place in the bundle with a note showing that the papers have been destroyed. A similar note should also be made in the list of file numbers.

(5) Owing to the limited space in the record-room it is the practice to appoint a retired officer periodically of the status of Superintendent or Under Secretary to overhaul the record bundles with a view to weeding out such C & B files as are no longer necessary for retention. There are no hard and fast rules on the subject, and the question whether a file should or should not be retained depends largely on experience and the officer on special duty must exercise his discretion in the matter. It is a standing order that before any papers belonging to the Political Branches are destroyed, a list should be prepared for the orders of the Chief Secretary through the Deputy or Under Secretary, Political.

53. Duties of Restorers :—

- (i) to stitch all recorded papers and to repair all damaged file covers and pages.
- (ii) to restore files in their proper bundles by main-heads, sub-heads, etc. when they are recorded. All recorded files must be restored within two days of their receipt.
- (iii) to take out files from the bundles required by record keepers to be put up with fresh receipts. No body but the restorer, shall remove files from the record bundles. Requisitions which comply with the instructions in the preceding paragraph, must be attended to promptly and no restorer should leave office, except with the special permission of the Supdt., Records, until all requisition have been complied with by him;
- (iv) to maintain registers showing the marking of files removed from the record bundles and to see that the marking are kept up-to-date;
- (v) to periodically take out files from the cupboards with the assistance of the fresh and have them dusted and sprayed with record preserver under the general supervision of the Superintendent Records;
- (vi) to periodically verify files in the bundles and to bring all missing files without marking promptly to the notice of Superintendent Records;