

Chapter 27

Release of information to the Press

27.1 General

Rule 8(2) of the CCS (Conduct) Rules, 1964 provides as under:-

No government servant shall, except with the previous sanction of the government or of the prescribed authority, or except in the bonafide discharge of his duties”,

- a) Publish a book himself or through a publisher, or contribute an article to a book or a compilation of articles, or
- b) Participate in a radio broadcast or contribute an article or write a letter to a newspaper or periodical either in his own name or anonymously or pseudonymously or in the name of any other person:

Provided that no such sanction shall be required:-

- i) If such publication is through a publisher and is of a purely literary artistic or scientific character; or
- ii) If such contribution, broadcast or writing is of a purely literary, artistic or scientific character.

These rules of government are applicable to the employees of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and should be strictly complied with. Failure on their part to adhere to these provisions will be viewed seriously and will be treated as good and sufficient reason for taking disciplinary action against them.

As far as the publication of research results in scientific journal is concerned, separate procedure has, been laid down in the Council's letter No.10-11/77-Per-IV dated 9.11.77 which permits scientists to forward research papers to scientific journals in the circumstances specified in the letter.

(ICAR No. 22-3/78-EE IV dated 13.2.1978)

- 27.2 Detailed instructions issued by the Ministry of information and Broadcasting in regard to release of information to the Press and the role of information officers attached to various Ministries /Departments of the Government of India apply mutatis-mutandis to the ICAR. They are given below:-

27.3 Communication of information to the Press:

- 27..3.1 All news should be communicated to the Press through the Press information Bureau. The Bureau should also be normally the channel of communication to other news media, like radio, television, etc.



- 27.3.2 In all Ministries, no one except the Minister in charge and the Secretary should give any information to, or be accessible to press representatives. i.e. Correspondents accredited to the Government of India by the Press information Bureau. The Minister in-charge may, in special cases, authorize an Additional Secretary or Joint Secretary, or other officer to give information to press representatives on any particular subject. But no general authorization should be given. Any other official if approached by a Press representative, should direct the latter to the Press information Bureau.
- 27.3.3 Information officers (Deputy Principal information Officers/Directors of Public Relation) of the Press information Bureau are attached to every Ministry of the Government of India. It is the function of the information officer to give publicity to the policies and programmes of the Ministry to which he is attached and to keep the Ministry informed of the reactions of the public thereto as reflected in the Press. In order to discharge his functions properly, the information officer should be given all facilities in keeping with his functional responsibilities. He should be invited to attend internal meetings in the Ministry and should be supplied with copies of reports and background note for official use.
- 27.3.4 Since the information officer is the Ministry's official spokesman to the Press, it is important that he should have access to all source of information and be briefed by 'Senior Official from time to time. On his part, the information officer will not release to the Press any information without obtaining clearance from the appropriate quarter.
- 27.3.5 At interviews with accredited Press Correspondents, the information officer should normally be asked to be present

27.4 Press Release:

- 27.4.1 The form in which information is to be released to the Press will be decided by the Press information Bureau, that is, whether it should be a Press Note, an official handout, an unofficial release or in any other suitable form (A Press communiqué is issued only to announce appointments of high dignitaries or Joint Statements with foreign Government.) The release will be drafted by the information officer from material placed at his disposal by the Ministry.
- 27.4.2 When any official report, resolution, notification etc. comes up for publication, the information officer should be consulted well in advance about the date and time of the publication. This will enable him also to prepare the Press release explaining the salient features of the publications.
- 27.4.3 A public notice or any matter which should appropriately issue in the form of an advertisement should not be issued as Press release. Material of this kind should be advertised through the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity. However, in the suitable cases, there should be no objection to a press note or press release being issued in addition to an advertisement to explain the subject.



27.4.4 If the information received from the Ministry is found to be in conflict with that already released or about to be released by another Ministry, the Press Information Bureau will hold over the release of such information to the Press and immediately consult the Ministry or Ministries concerned in order to reconcile the conflict. Publicity given to the material will be decided on the basis of these consultations.

27.5 Press Conferences

27.5.1 Communication with the Press may also take the form of a press conference or a press briefing

27.5.2. Such press conferences or press briefings are generally held to:

27.5.3 Explain to accredited correspondents and selected editors the scope and purpose of an important report or an official statement, etc. which is likely to be of wide-spread public interest or

27.5.4 Give the Press a general review of the policies and activities of government; or

27.5.5 Explain to the Press any specific important development

27.5.6 Press conferences may be held by the Minister only, or under his direction, by Secretary. Press briefing may however, be held by other senior official, specifically authorized in this behalf. Information given at such briefings will be attributed to an official spokesman or 'official source' but not to anybody by name.

27.5.7 Whenever it is proposed to hold a Press Conference, the information officer concerned should be informed in advance and consulted about the date and time of the conference. The information officer will also make suggestion for holding a Press Conference or a Press Briefing when, in his opinion, this would help to put forward the governments point and clarify details of policies.

The information officer should be provided with material from which he will prepare a handout for distribution at the Press Conference.

(ICAR Administrative Manual)

(Chapter 31: Pg. 287-290)