

**Office of Registrar of Newspapers for India
(M/o Information & Broadcasting)
9th Floor, Soochna Bhawan, CGO Complex,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003**

14th October, 2022

Sub: Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to be followed by all PIB officers with regard to Circulation Verification-reg.

Attention of all officers is drawn to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Order No. M-25013/99/2016-MUC dated 14th July, 2016, RNI's subsequent office order No. 613/CV/1/14-15-Circulation (Pt) dated 14th June, 2017 and Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Order No. M-25013/14/2015-MUC dated 01.09.2017 by which the powers to carry out the entire work related to Circulation Verification of publications have been delegated to various PIB officers, who have been designated Additional Press Registrar, Deputy Press Registrar and Assistant Press Registrar as the case may be, for the purpose of performing the functions as may be assigned to them, by the Press Registrar, under PRB Act, 1867, under the general superintendence and control of the Press Registrar. A set of detailed guidelines to carry out the circulation verification has already been circulated and are also available on RNI's website.

In order to achieve greater co-ordination and ensure a more effective, accountable and transparent mechanism of circulation verification, it has been decided that the following procedure will strictly be followed by the verification team. The verification of circulation has to be done either on request or complaint basis barring the exceptional situation wherein if the ADG (R) is reasonably convinced based on primary information that the circulation of any publication has drastically come down due to some specific situation wherein the ADG (R) can initiate the circulation verification process suo moto. In the case of complaint and suo moto verification, the ADG (R) will take prior approval of the Press



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Registrar.PR is statutorily mandated to have overall supervision & superintendence on the CV processes in entire country.

The following guidelines will supersede the earlier ones if there is anything found contrary.

A. Acceptance of Application:

- i) The application will be accepted after due scrutiny by an empanelled Chartered Accountant. An application completed in all respects (as Annexure A) would be accepted and an acknowledgment slip with date and time will be issued to the publisher.
- ii) No new circulation verification request will be accepted in the month of March, April and May and no circulation verification will be carried out during the month of April and May.
- iii) For circulation verifications from 1st June onwards the facts and figures of only the last (preceding) financial year will be accepted for consideration.
- iv) The Regional and branch offices should ensure that all verifications may be completed within 45 days of receipt of the complete and correct documents. All verifications may be done on first come first serve basis with prior intimation to the Press Registrar.
- v) The publishers are required to file their fresh CV request at least 60 days prior to the expiry date of existing circulation verification certificate issued by PIB.

B. Processing the Application:

- i) After accepting the verification request, an office order by an ADG (R) will be issued (as per Annexure B) constituting the team in not more than a week. The team leader will be an officer of PIB/CBC serving in the level of Addl. PR (ADG)/ Deputy PR (Director)/ Asstt. PR (Deputy Director).
- ii) The assignment to the empanelled CAs having head/branch office in the respective region has to be given strictly on rotational basis. If



any CA is not available/willing to take up the assignment, a written denial will be obtained from him and in such cases this CA will not be considered even for the next cycle of rotation. The member CA will give an undertaking to the team leader (as per Annexure C) before concluding the verification exercise.

- iii) In case of inevitability because of non-availability of empanelled CA/CA firm in the state, the ADG(R) can take services of the CA from neighbouring state under intimation to the ADG(R) of that state.
- iv) If completed application remains unattended for 15 days or more by the regional PIB office, the publisher is free to submit an application for circulation verification at RNI HQ. RNI HQ will constitute a circulation verification team picking up the eligible officer from that region/nearby region and empanelled CA. In such cases also the concerned ADG (R) will be overall supervisory and certificate issuing authority.
- v) The RNI team will follow the detailed SOP of Circulation Verification guidelines to conclude the actual circulation figures (Modus operandi of auditing aspects to conclude final figures is not dealt with here). The spot visit will be to confirm the veracity of the publisher's claims made for the previous financial year for which the circulation verification is being done. Anything observed/found contrary to the claims will be duly recorded and effected into the calculation of the final circulation figures.
- vi) The team leader and the CA has to remain present (to be video graphed) during the spot visit and the market survey.
- vii) If so felt the need by the ADG (R), it is desirable that he himself makes a surprise visit to the printing press and get the actual numbers of hard copies counted (may be video graphed)
- viii) During the course of circulation verification if there is a bonafide complaint against the CA by the RNI team leader/publisher then ADG (R) will reconstitute the team with prior approval from RNI HQ. In case of receiving such a complaint in RNI HQ, PR may ask the ADG (R) to reconstitute the team.







14/10/22

- ix) In case the publisher doesn't cooperate with the CA in providing the essential documents, after issuing a written notice giving him a week's time to submit the documents the CA will be free to arrive at a concluding figure based on the available documents. RNI team leader will then apply due diligence to arrive at a justifiable circulation figure.
- x) The publisher will be free to withdraw his request application for circulation verification at any point of time. However in that case his fresh request for the same edition will not be entertained in the region for next two years.
- xi) It is desirable that after accepting the application the certificate is issued in not more than 45 days(RNI team should not take more than 20 days for concluding the report after team constitution)

C. Releasing the Certificate.

- i) The certificate has to be signed and released by the ADG (R) only (in existing standard format) after filing ADG's report as per Annexure D.
- ii) On getting the complete report in the form of Annexure I to IV, after due scrutiny the ADG (R) will process the conclusion of the verification exercise.
- iii) An affidavit from the publisher will be obtained before issuing the certificate (as per Annexure E).
- iv) The certificate copy along with the complete verification report (Annexures I to IV & D, E) will be sent to PR, RNI HQ within a week.
- v) For Delhi-NCR region, ADG nominated by PDG, PIB HQ will be in charge of RNI work.

D. Appeal for re-verification.

- i) Additional Press Registrar deputed by the Press Registrar will undertake the responsibility of redressal of Appeal. After providing reasonable opportunity of being heard to the applicant publisher, the PR will accept the Appeal for re-verification or reject it.

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- ii) The PR, as an appellate authority, will constitute a RNI team for circulation re-verification by picking up eligible officers from the corresponding regions along with an empanelled CA.
- iii) The appeal has to be made within 30 days from the issuance of the circulation verification certificate.
- iv) The re-verification certificate will be issued on approval from the PR.

Annexures:

Annexure A – List of 13 documents

Annexure B - Circulation verification order

Annexure C - CA's certificate

Annexure D - Certification by ADG (R)

Annexure E - An affidavit from the publisher

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Annexure - AList of Documents

1. Copy of Annual Statement submitted to RNI
2. Copy of Bank account statements reflecting sale receipts and payments for 2 months
3. Copy of newsprint purchase bills for 2 months
4. Month wise newsprint purchase and consumption statements
5. Copies of Print Orders along with Machine Room Returns for the preceding one month
6. Printing machine details with printing schedule for the check period
7. Copy of Agent supply register for one month
8. Statement giving Wastage rate and Commission rate to agencies
9. Copy of month wise Sale proceeds for the check year
10. In case the printing press is not owned by the publisher, then a copy of the Agreement between the owner of the publishing house and the Printer to be given
11. Balance Sheet of the company, if the newspaper is owned by the company
12. Electricity Bills of the Company including the Printing Press for the preceding two months
13. Photocopy of PAN Card of publisher/owner.



14/10/12

Annexure-BCirculation Verification Order

File no.....

Government of India

Office of the Additional Press Registrar of Newspapers for India
(Ministry of Information and Broadcasting)9th Floor, Soochna Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003

Dt:

OFFICE ORDER

In exercise of the power conferred upon the undersigned vide Section 19 (F) and 19 (I) of PRB Act, 1867 and the rules made there under and taking into consideration the request of the following newspaper/periodical mentioned below, I hereby constitute a team comprising ----- (as a team leader) to undertake spot check verification of the publication mentioned in below list. The team will be assisted by CA -----in to undertake this work. It is expected that utmost co-operation may be extended by the publisher to the members of the team in discharging their statutory duties:

Sr.no	Publication name/Edition with RNI No.	Place	Language	Received request date	on	(Spot Circulation Verification Date)
1.						

Yours faithfully,

()

Addl. Director General

PIB (Region)_____







Annexure-C

Certificate by Chartered Accountant

I/We certify that I/we have examined the books and accounts of (Name of the Publication) for the period from 01/04/....to 31/03/..... and have obtained all the information and explanation required by me/us.

In my/our opinion the report by me/us reflects true and correct analysis of the sales of the publisher/publication for the period ending 31/03/..... to the best of our information and belief and according to the explanations given to us and as shown by books of account.

The circulation of the publication as derived from the above examination/scrutiny of documents is hereby certified as (copies per publishing day) including (sold) and (free).

I/We have exercised due professional care in performance of work and do understand that my conclusions will have a bearing on the advertising rates in respect of Government advertisements which may be given to such publications.

.....
Seal & Signature of Chartered Accountant with date

Name of the Chartered Accountant:
Name of the firm (if applicable):
Registration No. of CA:
Mobile/Contact No.:
Address of CA/CA firm:
UDIN number:
Place:
Date:

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Annexure - D

ADG's Report

i. Name of the periodical with edition (daily/weekly/ monthly/fortnightly):

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ii. Name of the publisher :

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iii. RNI number :

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.....

iv. Circulation verification date and time :

.....

v. RNI team members:

1.....

.....

2.....

.....

3.....

.....

vi. Name of the CA firm :

.....

vii. CA report submission date :

.....

viii. RNI team leader certifying date:

.....

I have thoroughly gone through the observations of RNI team vide Annexure I to IV with due diligence. I have checked the findings to the best of my knowledge and information. I agree with the findings of the RNI team and hereby vindicate the certified figures of the circulation ----- copies per publishing day.

Signature.....

Name.....

Seal.....



Annexure - E

AFFIDAVIT BY THE PUBLISHER

I, the publisher of _____(Name of publication, edition & RNI No.)do hereby solemnly affirm that we have so far filed RNI annual statements precisely reflecting the actual circulation figures. I state that the data provided in RNI annual statement (year of present CV) exactly show the actuality without concocting/inflating any facts and figures. We have provided the same data along with supporting documents to the RNI team constituted for CV in true faith and spirit whenever they visited our premises for circulation verification or asked by them for the same.

We owe complete responsibility for the said submissions. Any discrepancy in our submission is making us liable as per the relevant legal provisions.

Date_____

Seal and Signature

Place_____

(Publisher)

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten initials]

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten signature]
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