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Air HQ /99797/2(CPDS)/RP/O/DAV

08 Mar 22

**As per distribution**

**MIGRATION OF LEGACY PENSIONERS TO SPARSH**  
**(SYSTEM FOR PENSION ADMINISTRATION - RAKSHA)**

1. The information furnished herewith pertains to launch of project SPARSH, the current status as well as prospective implementation action.

**Background**

2. As a part of "Digital India" programme launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Service HQs are to enhance the digitization efforts to become "Digital Armed Force". Post in-principle go-ahead for implementation of Project SPARSH, a comprehensive web based interactive pension disbursement system for the defence pensioners was received in Apr 2017.

3. A comprehensive web based sanctioning and disbursement system namely Centralized Pension Disbursement System (CPDS) or System for Pension Administration-RAKSHA (SPARSH) has been developed by O/o CGDA for all the three services. The main aim is to ensure correct payment of pension to defence pensioners and reduce the grievances arising due to multifarious disbursing agencies involved in payment of Defence Pension.

4. The Indian Air Force was the first amongst the three services to implement the directions of MoD with effect from 15 Feb 21. Since then, all the cases of prospective IAF retirees are being processed smoothly on Project SPARSH.

5. Appended below are the salient features of Project SPARSH:-

- (a) Faster processing of pension related activities
- (b) Single click access to information
- (c) Instant email/ SMS alerts
- (d) Online query handling and Redressal of Grievance
- (e) Online reporting of death of pensioner for commencement of family pension



(f) Monthly pension payment instructions to e-Kuber {the core banking solution (CBS) platform of RBI} by SPARSH system and pension credited to pensioners account directly without interference of banks

6. Comparison of legacy system and new system is placed at Appendix 'A' for reference.

7. Post implementation of the Phase-I of the project for the prospective retirees, the office of CGDA has initiated Phase-II of the project whereby the legacy pensioners also are being migrated onto the new system. Accordingly, certain number of legacy pensioners (01 Jan 2016 onwards) have already been migrated onto the new system. It was informed by O/o CGDA that total number of pensioners on or after 01 Jan 16 are approximately 5 Lakh out of which 26000 pensioners are from IAF. There are some concerns/ issues, related to migration process of legacy pensioners and also the family pensioners, which have been brought to the notice of service HQs by the veterans. These are summarised herewith:-

- (a) Non receipt of pension in some cases.
- (b) Non credit of Dearness Relief along with the pension.
- (c) Service Centres not being fully functional.
- (d) Non availability of a robust Grievance Redressal Mechanism.
- (e) Migration without authentication of pensioner's data.
- (f) Non commencement of pensions due to difficulties in initial identification by the family pensioners.

8. In this regard, various meetings with Addl Secy (AP), Secy DESW and Addl CGDA were held wherein the issues faced by veterans on migration to SPARSH were projected. Salient aspects and suggestions under consideration at O/o CGDA are placed at Appendix 'B'.

### **Current Status**

9. A meeting was held on 08 Feb 22 in the office of Def Secy with VCAS and AOA. All concerns of the SPARSH system were projected to Def Secy vide letter No. Air HQ/99797/2 (CPDS)/RP/O/DAV dated 11 Feb 22 and a regular follow up is being maintained.

10. It is worth highlighting that post repeated concerns raised by Service HQ, wrt redressal of grievance process and network connectivity, it is learnt that PCDA (pension) has signed an MoU with CSC (Common Service Centres), which are almost four lakhs Pan India.



11. Further an interaction with Defence Secretary was held on 04 Mar 22, wherein, all aspects related to SPARSH were highlighted by the Services. The Def Secy has sought updates on each segment from the O/o CGDA / PCDA. The concerns of legacy pensioners were deliberated at length and the purported road map was sought in specific time frame. Subsequently, a presentation to Hon'ble Raksha Mantri is scheduled for 15 Mar 22.

12. The above is for kind information, please. Your office will be updated regularly on process flow of SPARSH.

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Appendix 'A'  
 (Para 6 of AIRHQ/99797/ 2  
 (CPDS)/RP/O/DAV  
 dated Mar 22 refers)

**COMPARISON OF LEGACY SYSTEM AND NEW SYSTEM**

SI No	<u>LEGACY SYSTEM</u>	<u>SPARSH SYSTEM</u>
(a)	Manual processing of pension forms at DAV and JCDA	Filled online by the DAV (processing time reduced by 3 months)
(b)	Hard copy to JCDA	Online to JCDA (rectifications online)
(c)	Pension Sanctioning Authority(PSA) was JCDA (AF). Pension Disbursing Authority(PDA) was bank	Principal Controller of Defence Accounts {PCDA (Pensions)} Prayagraj has taken over both the roles
(d)	Amendments was prolonged and with DAV contacts	Can be done by logging on to SPARSH
(e)	Stage of submission of pension papers to PPO – no clue on his details	Pensioners Data Verification (PDV) has been introduced for verification of details online
(f)	Grievances – Through banks and DAV	Online through SPARSH
(g)	CPPC(central pension payment centre) used to handle queries and clarifications	Common Service Centres (CSC) in all states



Appendix 'B'  
(Para 8 of AIRHQ/99797/ 2  
(CPDS)/RP/O/DAV  
dated Mar 22 refers)

**SUGGESTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION AT THE O/O CGDA**

- (a) Migration of legacy pensioners to be undertaken sequentially year wise retrospectively.
- (b) List of legacy pensioners to be shared by PCDA (P) for data authentication before migration to SPARSH.
- (c) In first phase, legacy pensioners (post 01 Jan 16 : 7<sup>th</sup> CPC) only to be migrated.
- (d) Case needs to be taken up by the O/o CGDA for waiving off first identification process for family pensioners on migration to SPARSH.
- (e) All long outstanding cases which were pending with JCDA / PCDA are to be cleared on legacy system.
- (f) Steering Committee Meeting will be held periodically at the O/o CGDA and Reps of Service HQs will be part of the meetings till completion of migration process.
- (g) JCDA issued 40-50% suo-moto ePPOs with incorrect details and ePPOs will form basis for migration. Hence, it should be corrected in a time bound manner.
- (h) Establishment of robust and user friendly grievance redressal mechanism is necessary.
- (j) Resolution of service request in a holistic manner within a reasonable time frame.
- (k) O/o CGDA is coordinating with the already established CSCs (Common Service Centres) to facilitate resolution of problems being faced by legacy pensioners on migration to SPARSH. As on date Approx Four Lakh CSC centres are functional throughout India, covering Tri-services.
- (l) Migration of Pre 2016 legacy pensioners should only start after successful stabilisation of Post Jan 2016 migrated cases.