

No. PC-9/LA/RS/Addl DG/DE/5928/D(Lands)
Government of India
Ministry of Defence
New Delhi, the 8th December, 1992

To

The Director General,
Defence Estates,
Ministry of Defence,
West Block No. IV,
R.K. Puram,
New Delhi-110066.

Subject : Guidelines for conduct of Land Audit

Sir,

In order to assess the extent/efficiency of Defence land use by the User Organisations and to rationalise and maximise the use of existing land holdings for Defence purposes, it has been felt necessary to conduct land audit with primary focus on the existing land use vis-a-vis land holdings and specific requirements. The audit of land holdings shall be primarily in the nature of internal audit designed to help the User Organisations to achieve an efficient system of land management and should, therefore, cover all lands recorded in the Registers maintained by the MEOs. Within these broad parameters, the following aspects are suggested for inclusion in the land audit. These are not exhaustive and may be modified/added to in the light of experience gained in the process of audit:—

- (i) The actual use of Defence lands outside the Cantonment areas during the last 3 years, at selected locations. The audit shall also ascertain (a) the use of acquired land in cases of land acquired under the urgency clause as continuing non-use of such lands has invited adverse criticism from many quarters; and (b) the actual use of resumed sites in the Cantonments, indicating the schemes for the specific utilisation of such sites, with necessary details. This exercise should be confined to those Cantonments where a significant number of sites have been resumed.
- (ii) The condition of records maintained by the Military Estates Officers in respect of lands under occupation and management of the Army and whether the MEO's Registers contain the to-date status of various pockets of land under the active management of the LMA.
- (iii) The actual use of lands earmarked for training purposes.
- (iv) The position of land records maintained by Defence Estates Officers, i.e., GLRs. Do the GLRs accurately depict the land particulars and ownership rights/occupancy rights in respect of Defence lands?
- (v) The audit should ascertain the current status of Defence lands leased out to various institutions, including agricultural leases, and whether such institutions/persons are actually utilising the land for the purpose for which the lands were originally leased out. Cases of improper use of Defence lands by organisations should be specially indentified.
- (vi) Assessment of the extent of encroachments in selected Cantonments, by slum population or other institutions, due to the prolonged non-use of Defence lands.

(vii) Identification of pockets of Defence lands, in consultation with the User Organisations, not required for disposal at major Cantonments, with reasons therefore.

2. For the purpose of conducting a preliminary audit, covering the above aspects, a few Cantonments should be selected. Necessary Schedules/Questionnaire etc. should be got prepared by DGDE, so that, at a later stage, when the outcome of the audit is known, the responsibility for the conduct of audit could be delegated to the Directors of Commands.

3. On the basis of the preliminary studies indicated above, in the selected Cantonments, definite recommendations are required to be made on the following aspects;

(i) Limiting land acquisition to the extent strictly needed for Defence purposes.

(ii) Disposal of surplus land not required for Defence purposes, and, on a continuing basis, to ensure that vacant land is properly safeguarded from encroachments etc.

(iii) Updation of land, records.

4. Detailed instructions should be issued to all Cantonments, for review and to carry out the corrective action required in the identified areas of deficiency.

5. It is expected that certain related issues not covered in the above suggested guidelines may crop up during the course of the audit exercise. Addl. DGDE(SLD) should be instructed to identify all such issues and hold discussions with the concerned Formation Commander, during the conduct of audit.

6. The preliminary Audit exercise should be completed by 31st March, 1993, at the latest.

7. Monthly progress reports should be timely forwarded to the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(RANGAN DUTTA)

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

Copy to JS (Navy)/JS (Air) for similar necessary action in so far as the land under the control of Navy and Air Force is concerned.

2. Copy also to QMG/Dte. of AF Works/Air HQrs./Dte. of Works, NHQ.