

ASTO SUBMITS THE JOB ROTATION AND TRANSFER COMMITTEE REPORT  
TO THE MANAGEMENT

**JOB ROTATION & TRANSFER POLICY REVIEW**

**PREFACE:**

Job Rotation and Transfer Policy in ONGC has been in existence since 1998 and was reviewed in July 2003 and implemented with effect from Annual Transfer 2004. Keeping the present industry scenario, talent exodus from the organization, large scale discontent among the employees as well as the deterioration in the performance of assets, plants and individual in focus, ASTO and ONGC Management have realized that the scheme has not been able to achieve the desired objectives as intended in the scheme. The main objective of the policy, as envisaged by the management, was to have planned movement of employees to meet operational and /or administrative requirement of the organization, developing multi – dimensional knowledge and skills of employees, enabling employees to develop their own career path and providing flexibility in pursuing specialist tasks. Most of the envisaged objectives have not been met by the policy.

During the last three years the Oil & Gas sector in the country has undergone a sea change mainly due to the New Exploration Licensing Policy of the Government, new opportunities for Private Sector and a highly competitive environment. The Indian Oil Industry has started recognizing the specialization of the individual and the expertise that s/he has developed over the years whereas ONGC has not. Further the current transfer policy is aggravating the situation as the transfers are being done just for the sake of transfer on the basis of vintage and not by considering the expertise and exposure gained by the employee. Employees after acquiring specialization for 20 years or so are being transferred to an entirely new area of working needing a different set of knowledge and experience. Higher rate of exodus of well qualified specialists is also evident after the implementation of the Policy of 2003. Also the average age of the employees is around 45 years. In case of executives elevated from the ranks are mostly in the age bracket of around 55 years. This is the age which restricts their adaptability to new technology, work environment\* and this reduces their contribution to the organization at their new place of posting. We are left with no other alternative but to have a review of the policy and alter it to a frame where it is motivating and encouraging to employee

and give full return to the organization by way of achieving defined objectives.

Number of deliberation took place with the management and it was decided to form a task force of ASTO Representative from various regions to suggest improvement in the present scheme which is in force from AT - 2003. Accordingly the committee consisting of following members was constituted:-

1. S.K.Chaturvedi, President - Ahmedabad, Member Secretary.
2. S.Appa Rao, President - Hazira.
3. A.K.Safaya, President - Goa.
4. Tapan Dutta, Vice - President – Nazira - Sibsagar.
5. Rajesh Pathare. Secretary, Mumbai.
6. N.Mahalingam, Secretary, Chennai.
7. B.Chakraborty, Secretary, Silchar.
8. C.R. Das, President, Mumbai.
9. Amit Kumar, President, Delhi

Valuable inputs were given by Sh. Rajan Pillai, General Secretary, ASTO-CWC, Sh. A.K.Sinha, Secretary, Haizra, Sh. Armugham, President, Ankleshwar, Sh. C.S.Nair, Secretary, Ankleshwar, Sh. Rakesh Mohan, President, Cambay, Sh. S.S. Mayal, Secretary, Ahmedabad, Sh. V.V. Patel, Vice President, Sh. Kelkar, Joint Secretary and Sh. Rajesh Agarwal, Treasurer, Ahmedabad. The committee also received valuable suggestions from Sh. Lehembar Singh, ED-Asset Manager, Ahmedabad and members of Executive Committee of ASTO Ahmedabad – Sh. Deepak Mathur, SE(E&T), Sh. P.S. Pal, SG, Sh. S.S. Vashishth, DySE(P) and Sh. D. J. Borah, Sr. Prog. Officer.

First meeting of this JRTP Committee took place at Delhi on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2006 and subsequently a presentation was made to the management during the CWC meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2006. The second and final meeting took place at Ahmedabad on 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

## **Deliberations**

### **I. Drawbacks**

1. The job rotation and transfer policy has been in vogue since 2003. However, the implementation of the policy in true letter and spirit has not taken place till date.

2. Number of clauses have become redundant and hence need to be reviewed at the earliest.
3. Flexibility in pursuing specialist task could not be achieved due to transfer not based on developed skills.
4. Frequent transfers caused avoidable instability, resulting in inadequate development of expertise and grasp of responsibilities besides resulting in avoidable expenditure.
5. Though the policy envisages planned and need based transfers. However, the implementation has been totally unplanned without any manpower study and the requirement for a particular work center. The spate of transfers during the last three years has not at all been need based.
6. The policy has no provision for the succession planning of the Key executives.
7. Job rotation which should have been a major outcome after implementation of the policy has taken a back seat and the process of skill development and enhancing the knowledge base has remained only in papers. Job rotation within the work center has not taken place at any of the work center.
8. Overseas assignment has remained shrouded in mystery. There have not been clear cut guidelines for deploying the officers for foreign assignment/secondment.
9. The posting to new business initiatives, subsidiaries etc. has no clear cut defined policy. A proper transfer policy for posting to OVL needs to be put in place.
10. Employees could not plan their own career path as envisaged in the policy.

## **II. Recommendations**

1. Though the aims and objectives of the scheme are perfect in the spirit but number of issues resulting out of the present HR scenario has not been addressed in the scheme. Hence the committee felt that the scheme needs modifications and

incorporation of certain clauses to address the envisaged objectives as well as the present scenario and not a totally new scheme.

2. Job rotation within the work center: It has been noticed that during the initial stages of career ONGC while posting an officer at E-1 level (GTs) has not created any mechanism for overall knowledge development in a particular discipline, hence clause 3 (iv) a during the first 10 years of his/her career the officer needs to be rotated in at least 3 different categories of the job categories for that particular discipline. This can be done at work center level under the overall supervision of the head of that asset / basin / plant/services. In certain cases it may require transfer even before the minimum number of years at any work center, which may be done at the option of the concerned employee as envisaged in clause 1(iii). Especially for Geophysicists in the area of acquisition, processing and interpretation.
3. For Officers, who have risen from the ranks starting from E0, job rotation needs to be carried out, keeping in mind the skills set that they have developed through their career.
4. The specialization and flexibility in pursuing specialist tasks specially in area of Direction drilling/Instrumentation/process engineering/ Engineering design etc. needs to be pursued and a mechanism needs to be developed for identifying such specialized tasks and the specialists. However committee is of the opinion that only after an officer has gained experience through job rotation and working in at least two sectors can be considered for manning specialist tag. And after he/she be developed as a specialist for that particular specialist task.
5. Clause 3(ii) envisages at least two transfers for executives between E-1 to E-4, who are recruited as GTs. Practically it has been seen that it is impossible to comply with this clause In number of cases, hence committee recommends that this span should be up to E-5. Further, this clause is interrelated to clause 3(v)a. Therefore committee recommends that in clause 3(v)a also needs to be modified accordingly to E-5 level and for Executives who have not worked in NE sector, will be posted to NE sector before promotion to E-6 and above level.

6. In the cases of Q3 & below Q3 officers, who have risen from the ranks, transfer just for the sake of transfer does not justify the policy as well as we lose the operational expertise that the concerned officer has developed during his career. Accordingly, Committee recommends that Q3 and below Q3 officers should not be considered for transfer, considering their qualification and expertise acquired during the career. However they can be considered for transfer on administrative grounds or on their own option if so required.
7. As per clause 3 (vii) executives up to E-6 level who are due to superannuate within a period of three years may not be considered for transfer. The committee feels that this be raised to five years as at this stage the executive has number of family obligations that need constant attention which he is not able to give due to transfer mainly because he is constrained to move his family along with him.
8. As per clause 3(x) the final place of posting is also decided at the central level without studying discipline & level wise pattern of posting at a particular work centre. Number of times Asset / Basin / Plant/ Services Head require to change the place of posting within the work centre but are unable to do so. Hence committee opines that these Heads may be empowered to get the postings changed within the work centre with the concurrence of Chief HRD.
9. **Need based and planned transfers are the need of the hour. Highly qualified executives performing specialist roles are very often thrown into areas where their specialization is not put to use. This results in demoralization of the executives. As a result we have lost and are going to lose a sizeable number of our experts to our competitors who have better openings for them. If such specialists have to be retained at places even for longer duration, it will be in the best interest of the organization. Very often it takes more than six months before an employee gets a regular assignment in their new place of postings.**

The committee strongly recommends that the transfers should be on the actual requirement of the work centre based on the on going activities/ operations and envisaged plan for that particular work centre specially in case of NE.

In fact for NE postings, committee strongly feels that willingness option be taken for all the officers who are ready to serve in NE for a longer period without opting for QTF etc. This way we can reduce the NE transfers, improve the availability of officers at NE, thereby increasing efficiency in operations and improving performance of NE. Further we may also consider introducing 14 days ON/OFF pattern for all operations in NE.

10 Under clause 4(iv) the Director responsible for transfer from various disciplines need to be mentioned clearly in the policy. This will remove ambiguity as well as all the executives would be aware about the authority responsible for their transfers.

11. **Job Rotation /Transfer Process:**

I. As per clause 5(II), of transfer policy, committee opines that feed back received from the Key Executives needs to be put on the net before being further processed for approval. This will bring further transparency in transfer process.

II. Further before preparation of draft transfer list, the views of members of concerned discipline as nominated by concerned Director may be taken on the overall transfer list concerning to the particular Director before putting up for approval.

12. The committee opines that recommendation of Key executives regarding retention of a particular executive from his area/work center should be considered for one year only. This is being suggested so that Key executive as part of his responsibility to develop a successor for that particular job during this one year of retention period.

13. Under clause 6 (vii) the continuous stay at a particular Sector should be considered as twelve years instead of ten years. This is based on the present profile of stay under normal circumstances.

14. Under clause 7 (iii) the executives being considered for promotion to the level of E5 should have exposure to at least

two sectors instead of three. This is based on the present profile of stay under normal circumstances.

15. Under clause 8 (i) the representation against transfers under all categories shall be up to Competent Authority who is approving authority to transfer as per HR BDP item PM4 instead of Executive Committee.
16. Promotion should not be linked to transfer under normal circumstances. Further just for joining on promotion no executive should be forced to proceed on mid term transfer. However, if the executives have not fulfilled the criteria under clause 3 (v) (a) then the above suggestion shall not be applicable. In view of above suggestions clause 8 (ii) and (iii) needs to be deleted.
17. Under clause 8 (iv) word promotion needs to be deleted.
18. Clause 10 (i) and (ii) needs to be deleted as the committee feels that it is the responsibility of the management to plan the movement of the executives as per the policy.
19. Under Clause 7 (iv) mobility constraints on grounds of children education should be allowed twice in the executive's career.
20. Under Clause 7 (ix) the longest tenure of an executive in IPSHEM should be three years. This would help in more executives getting sensitized to safety, environment and health issues which of prime importance in present scenario.
21. The policy of overseas secondment as well as postings in ONGC's subsidiaries like **OVL, MRPL** etc. has not been defined so far. This has led to postings based on personal preferences and whims and fancies. Accordingly committee after due deliberations keeping in view the aspirations of the officer's community, their talent, uniformity in opportunity as well as change of working environment, proposes as under:
  - I. Postings in the subsidiaries like OVL, MRPL etc. should be for a maximum period of five years only.
  - II. Secondment for the overseas assignment should be strictly for a maximum period of two years. No

extension should be considered. This would help in healthy rotation of officers and give chance to more executives to work in different environments.

- III. The selection criteria need to be clearly defined and circulated as part of policy.
- IV. Preference should be given to officers working in field/hard areas like North East, Offshore etc.
- V. Officers who have completed at least ten years of service should only be considered.
- VI. To have a greater transparency in the selection process it is suggested that the list of selected officers against a particular assignment/posting should be displayed on the net. Further, officers who are not selected, the reasons for rejection should be also be posted on the net.

22. **Transfer of women executives:** While the issue of transfers of women executives has been much debated, every year a sizeable number of women executives move on transfers. Transfers in such cases not only affect the morale of the employee but the work output from them may also suffer.

Women executives are not averse to transfers. But it is also a fact that all of them cannot be weighed on the same scale as their male counterparts while implementing transfers. In this regard women executives can be categorized into three types:

- Those amongst them who can move and are career oriented
- Executives who can move with planning
- Executives who cannot move at all due to their spouse not having offices in regions where ONGC offices are located.

For women executives who cannot move at all due to their spouses being in other state/ central PSUs/state govt./central govt./ministries/not having offices where ONGC offices are located our suggestion is to:

- Keep the women executives at the same stations as their spouses. The Government directive on transfers for women executives may be applicable in ONGC where spouses are generally kept in the same workstations. If the spouses are transferred then the women executives may also be transferred wherever her spouse has been transferred provided ONGC office is there.
  - In extreme cases where transfers are required on administrative grounds, women should be allowed a u turn to their original place of postings.
  - The option of foregoing of promotions in cases of women not willing to move on transfers can be given for employees' up to E4 level in case of Q1/Q2 executives.
23. This has been observed by the committee that employees having medical constraints in respect of self/dependent are not getting due weight age because of recommendation of medical board. For example employees having chronic diseases like cancer, permanent disability, kidney failure and diseases related to brain are often recommended for one year retention or considered to be posted at places where such medical facilities are available, accordingly they are posted to NE also (where medical facilities of such standard are not available). It has also been noted that where diseases of permanent nature and treatment is life long, such cases are being considered on yearly basis. Committee is of the view that in such cases retention should be granted either permanently or till such disease is cured. Moreover in spite of constituting medical board and asking individuals to appear before the board, opinion of concerned in charge medical should be considered.
24. Training policy / job rotation should be linked with transfer of employee. This is in order to give adequate exposure to employee to take up new assignments at new place of posting on transfer. Executives who have received specialized training should be posted to utilize the knowledge, skill and expertise gained through these trainings.

### **III. General Points:**

1. The policy should be implemented in the right earnest and spirit. The guidelines of the policy should be strictly adhered to.
2. The committee noted that in large number of cases, especially in last three years, a large number of officers have been promoted to corporate level without serving in NE sector whereas many other officers might have been denied their promotions on the very same ground. Hence the committee is of the opinion that such officers need to complete their NE tenure immediately to boost the morale of the others.
3. The committee feels very strongly that the Institute like IDT, IOGPT and KDMIPE, IEOT etc. to be rejuvenated with authority, autonomy and accountability. These institutes should not be considered as dumping ground. In fact they should become the area for specialization and extended arms of operations/all assets to aid in enhancement of performance.
4. The committee feels that executives should not be posted from prime locations to prime locations and hard stations to hard stations. However, in case of operational requirement and specialized groups / projects may be considered.
5. The postings at various operational areas should not be based on the level but on the basis of their knowledge, experience, qualification and trade. For example the executives who have been working at process platforms/plants surface team are being posted in different activities while posted in NE and has resulted in reduction in the performance. The tenure of NE doe not allow the individual to acquire the knowledge within this time frame.
6. The committee felt that under normal circumstances the In charges/Head of sections/departments should be minimum one level above than the executives posted at the particular sections/departments.

7. The committee also discussed the issues related to the cases of executives whose promotions were delayed due to the provision of clause 8(iii) of the transfer policy of 1998. Though the clause is subsequently withdrawn and most of the executives have moved on transfer subsequently. However, the cases have still not been reviewed. Hence the committee strongly feels that all such cases be reviewed and the promotions of these executives be restored.

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