



Government of India
Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue
Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs
Directorate General of Human Resource Development, HRM-I
Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, 2nd & 3rd Floor, Bhai Vir Singh Marg
Gole Market, New Delhi-110001

To,

Pr. Chief Commissioner/ Chief Commissioner, Customs and GST - (All), Pr. Director General /Director General -(All),
Pr. Commissioner/ Pr. ADG/ Commissioner/ ADG, Customs and GST - (All),
Chief Controller of Factories/ Narcotics Commissioner, Gwalior, Commissioner (Coordination), CBIC/ JS (Admin) CBIC, New Delhi.

Sir/Madam,

Subject: Online writing of APAR in SPARROW-CBIC for Group 'B' and 'C' Officers/Staff and "Other than IRS (C&IT) Group 'A' Officers" for the year 2024-25-reg.

Please refer to this office letter F.No- 8/DB/145/11RD(IIRM-II)/2017-Pt.II dated 15.05.2019 (available in DGHRD website) wherein detailed instructions have been issued for online writing of APAR in SPARROW-CBIC of "other than IRS (C&IT) Group A Officers" and "Group B & C" Officers/ Staff.

2. SPARROW-CBIC has been successfully implemented w.e.f. APAR Cycle 2018-19 for Cadres up to the rank of Head Havaldars and above (i.e., Grade Pay 1900 and above). However, **from APAR Cycle 2020-21, the online writing of APAR in SPARROW-CBIC has been extended to the Cadres of Havaldars and MTS as well.**
3. To facilitate the smoother implementation of APAR Cycle 2024-25, the following points may kindly be noted for compliance.

Updation of name/ role of Custodian and Alternate Custodian:

- 3.1. Updation of name/ role of Custodian and Alternate Custodian of all the formations in SPARROW-CBIC is an essential prerequisite for initiating online writing of APAR.

3.2. For smooth functioning of the module and timely disposal of requests, Role of **Super Custodian** has been allocated to the JC/ADC level officers in CCO/HQ of Zones/Directorates to ensure sanctity of the data and efficiency handling functionalities listed as below:

- Transfer of officers from one formation to another formation in SPARROW system through PIMS (initiate transfer, relieving employee, joining employee).
- Allocation of roles of Custodians and Alternate Custodians in SPARROW – CBIC (Role Mapping).
- Updation of Personal details of the officers through PIMS (Search Employee).

3.3. Since the role of Super Custodian is imperative, the Super Custodian should give the roles to the Custodian /Alternate Custodian as below:

- Custodian :
 1. PAR State Custodian(Primary)
 2. Dossier Access Authority
 3. Migration Authority
 4. PAR Administrator
- Alternate Custodian:
 1. PAR State Custodian (Alternate)
 2. Migration Authority

3.4 The lists of all the formations in SPARROW (for the purpose of online Performance Appraisal Reporting) and the respective Custodian and Alternate Custodian as on 22.03.2025 is available on DGHRD website. It is requested to examine the list and in case of any change being necessitated that suitable Officers may be nominated for the roles of Custodian and Alternate Custodian on priority (**Such requests should be sent to Super Custodians of respective formations. The requests can also be sent online through email at help.sparrowcbic@gov.in along with the approval letter from the competent authority; Manual/ Physical letters may not be sent**). It is suggested that Custodian should be Group B 'Gazetted' Officer and Alternate Custodian should be any Group B Officer. In case, Officers presently assigned role/ charge of Custodian/ Alternate Custodian are not Group B 'Gazetted/ Group B Officers, they may continue. It is also advised that while nominating Officers for the role of Custodian/ Alternate Custodian, preferably, they should be the Officers from Vigilance/ APAR Section. It should be ensured that any such officer nominated for the role of Custodian/ Alternate Custodian has at least over one year of service left so as to enable completion of full APAR Cycle 2024-25.

3.5 It is to mention that the role of Custodian/ Alternate Custodian is critical for successful completion of APAR cycle, hence the Custodian/ Alternate Custodian should be well conversant with the Computer/ ITSystems/ tech-savvy.

latest by **21st September, 2025**. The **Competent Authority Stage-I** shall forward it in system to the **Reporting Officer** latest by **23rd September, 2025** to invite his comments on the APAR representation of the officer. Reporting Officer after giving his comments on the Representation shall forward it in system to the **Reviewing Officer** for his comments latest by **1st October, 2025**. The Reviewing Officer after giving his comments on the Representation, shall forward it in system to the **Competent Authority Stage-II** latest by **11th October, 2025**. The Competent Authority Stage-II (i.e. **Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation**) shall process the representation and put up the same to the "**Representation deciding authority**" for decision/orders. The order given by the "**Representation deciding authority**" shall be uploaded in the SPARROW-CBIC by "**Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation**" latest by **20th October, 2025**, which will then be communicated to the officer concerned by the Custodian latest by **31st October, 2025**. Upon this disclosure of order on his representation, the Officer Reported Upon has to **necessarily accept the APAR at this stage**. After acceptance, the APAR will once again go back to Custodian (CR Section) for Closure; the Custodian shall finally close the APAR and thereafter the APAR would attain finality and then only the APAR would be available in system.

It may be noted that APAR attains finality only after the APAR has been finally closed by the Custodian (CR Section) after acceptance of the APAR by the Officer Reported Upon after disposal of the APAR representation (if any) and due disclosure of the APAR. It is the duty of all concerned- Officer Reported Upon, Reporting Officer, Reviewing Officer, Representation Deciding Authority, Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation and Custodian/ Alternate Custodian — to take all requisite actions w.r.t. APAR Cycle/ APAR process as per the timelines prescribed. Any deviation may be viewed seriously.

5. Help Manuals in the form of step by step guide for different roles as Custodian, Officer Reported Upon, Reporting Officer and Reviewing Officer roles have been uploaded on the homepage of DGHRD website i.e. dghrdcbic.gov.in at HRM1-SPARROW-SPARROW HELP MANUAL for SPARROW-CBIC, which can be referred to.
6. In case of personal staff of Senior Officers viz. Steno/ PS/ Sr. PS etc., the concerned Officer will be the Reporting Officer as well as Reviewing Officer both for the purpose of APAR.

7. It has been observed that many Officers are submitting representations for mistakes/ errors etc. in Section-I of APAR. As per DoPT guidelines, representations can be submitted only for Gradings/ Comments/ Remarks. Representations cannot also be submitted for non- reporting/ non-reviewing of APAR. Representation should not be submitted in case APAR has been force forwarded from both reporting and reviewing authority stages. In such a case, said APAR has to be accepted by the officer reported upon and finally closed by the custodian. A manual NRC for said period has to be created and forwarded to this office so that it can be uploaded to the portal.
8. Level jumping of the Officers in hierarchal setup of working for the purpose of APAR Reporting or Reviewing has been observed w.r.t. Workflow of APAR (for example: Commissioner is made the Reporting Officer for a Superintendent). This is not an acceptable practice. It directly affects the APAR chain, as then, there will be no further higher officer available for further actions w.r.t. APAR process (so as to complete all APAR steps/actions at the Commissionerate/ Zonal Level), It may be ensured that the APARs upto the grade of Superintendent be reviewed by the Officers upto the grade of Additional Commissioner/ Commissioner only.
9. For Officers working on regular Deputation, whether within or outside the department, the APAR practice followed in the deputation organization will be followed. In such cases, parent office/cadre/ parent zone is **not** to initiate APAR of such officer of the deputation period.
10. For Officers working on loan basis in some other Formation, it is ideal that the Custodian of the Formation where officer is presently working on loan basis initiates the APAR in SPARROW-CBIC.
11. In SPARROW-CBIC, respective Custodians have been given the APAR Retrieval rights of the Officers mapped in their formation. Considering the sensitivity and confidential nature of APAR records, the Custodians are expected to exercise due care and precaution in this regard. Custodian can access/ retrieve the APARs of Officers/Staff of his respective formation for official purposes. It is also necessary that the Officers/Staff in SPARROW-CBIC are correctly mapped/reflected in their present formation (so that their APARs are available to the concerned Custodian). In case of transfer of officers, Custodians/ Alternate Custodian should immediately inform the same to DGHRD (through email help.sparrowcbic@gov.in), for updation in SPARROW- CBIC database.
12. It is expected that one formation (either CCO or a setup headed by Commissioner/ ADG) should have only one Custodian and few Alternate Custodians. The following w.r.t. the Custodian and Alternate Custodians are suggested:

3.6. SPARROW-CBIC is now only be accessible through Web VPN saccess.nic.in along with the tabs of eOffice CBIC and SPARROW-IRS.

3.7. SPARROW-SEVA is not functional anymore. Hence, it is requested to kindly send all the request to email help.sparrowcbic@gov.in only.

3.8. GOV/NIC email id related work/portal has been delegated to DGPM, so far any issue/query related to GOV/NIC email id, concerned helpdesk may be contacted in DGPM.

3.9. Nodal Officer for NRC and Representation:

- In all the formations ("Formation" here means CCO/Directorate Hqrs or a setup headed by Commissioner/ ADG), the Officer holding the charge of AC/DC (P&V/ Vigilance/ Establishment/ Admin) shall be appointed as "Nodal Officer for NRC and Representation" for SPARROW-CBIC. For the purpose of creation of Workflow of NRCs and Representations in APAR workflow, only this Officer will be selected as "Competent Authority" for the Workflow of NRC as well as "Competent Authority Stage-I" and Competent Authority Stage-II for the Workflow of Representation.
- It may be noted that the NRC Approving Authority is present incumbent Commissioner for the Officers of the rank of Superintendent/other senior Officer (covered in SPARROW-CBIC) and present incumbent JC/ADC (P&V) for all other Group B & C Officers/Staff.
- It may also be noted that the Authority for deciding any representation is the present incumbent Officer holding the charge of one rank above the Reviewing Officer; If AC/DC is the Reviewing Officer, then, JC/ADC in the present Place of Posting/ Present Charge of the Officer Reported Upon will be the deciding authority for representation; if JC/ADC is the Reviewing Officer, then, Commissioner in the present Place of Posting of the Officer Reported Upon will be the representation deciding authority and if, Commissioner is the Reviewing Officer, then, Chief Commissioner will be the representation deciding authority. It will be the responsibility of "Nodal Officer for NRC and Representation" to examine all the NRC requests and Representations and put up the same to NRC approving Authority/ Representation Deciding Authority. After taking approval for NRC/ decision on representation, the Nodal Officer shall approve/upload the NRC/representation order in SPARROW-CBIC by giving the File No./ other details etc, in which the NRC Approving Authority/ Representation Deciding Authority has given the approval/ decision.

For example: If Shri ABC is AC (P&V) in respect of a Commissionerate, then while creating the NRC Workflow, Shri ABC should be selected as the "Competent

electronically in respect of all the Officers/ Staff who are working in the formation as on date including for the officers who have gone on long leave/ training / foreign assignment from that formation.

- 4.6. The PAR generated shall be available in the inbox of the Officer Reported Upon. He/she should complete Self-Appraisal in Section-II in all respects and forward the same to the Reporting officer after e-signing by **15th April, 2025**. In case, the officer does not forward his APAR timely, it will be force forwarded in system to the Reporting Officer for appraisal without resume/ self appraisal.
- 4.7. The Reporting Officer shall appraise the officer reported upon in Section III of APAR, complete in all aspects and forward the APAR to the Reviewing Officer after e-signing by **30th June, 2025**. In case, the Reporting Officer does not forward the APAR timely to Reviewing Officer, it will be force forwarded in system to the Reviewing Officer for appraisal.
- 4.8. The Reviewing Officer shall appraise the officer reported upon in Section III of APAR for numerical gradings (against all individual/ overall attributes) and complete Section IV in all respects and forward the APAR to the Custodian after e-signing by **31st July, 2025**. In case, the Reviewing Officer does not appraise the APAR timely, he will forfeit his right to review the APAR and the APAR shall be force forwarded in system from Reviewing Authority to the Custodian (CR Section) for disclosure to the Concerned Officer (Officer Reported Upon).
- 4.9. The Custodian shall disclose the completed APAR to the Officer Reported Upon electronically latest by **01st September, 2025**. The officer reported upon may view the APAR and may either accept it or choose to represent. If the Officer accepts the APAR, then he will accept the same in the system and then the APAR will once again go back to Custodian (CR Section) for Closure; the Custodian shall finally close the APAR and thereby the APAR would attain finality. If the officer does not accept the APAR, he can represent to the **Competent Authority** online along with any reference document in support of his representation within 15 days of communication in 'MY PAR' Tab. It may be noted that for the purpose of workflow of Representation (in PAR workflow), the Reporting Officer and Reviewing Officer will be the same as already selected in Standard PAR Workflow and the Officer nominated as "Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation" will be selected as both "Competent Authority Stage-I" as well as "Competent Authority Stage-II".
- 4.10. The representation shall reach the Custodian who shall then forward it to the **"Competent Authority Stage-I"** electronically for consideration/ disposal of the representation (as has already been discussed, the **Competent Authority Stage-I & Stage-II shall be the concerned "Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation"**)

latest by **21st September, 2025**. The **Competent Authority Stage-I** shall forward it in system to the **Reporting Officer** latest by **23rd September, 2025** to invite his comments on the APAR representation of the officer. Reporting Officer after giving his comments on the Representation shall forward it in system to the **Reviewing Officer** for his comments latest by **1st October, 2025**. The Reviewing Officer after giving his comments on the Representation, shall forward it in system to the **Competent Authority Stage-II** latest by **11th October, 2025**. The Competent Authority Stage-II (i.e. **Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation**) shall process the representation and put up the same to the "**Representation deciding authority**" for decision/orders. The order given by the "**Representation deciding authority**" shall be uploaded in the SPARROW-CBIC by "**Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation**" latest by **20th October, 2025**, which will then be communicated to the officer concerned by the Custodian latest by **31st October, 2025**. Upon this disclosure of order on his representation, the Officer Reported Upon has to **necessarily accept the APAR at this stage**. After acceptance, the APAR will once again go back to Custodian (CR Section) for Closure; the Custodian shall finally close the APAR and thereafter the APAR would attain finality and then only the APAR would be available in system.

It may be noted that APAR attains finality only after the APAR has been finally closed by the Custodian (CR Section) after acceptance of the APAR by the Officer Reported Upon after disposal of the APAR representation (if any) and due disclosure of the APAR. It is the duty of all concerned- Officer Reported Upon, Reporting Officer, Reviewing Officer, Representation Deciding Authority, Nodal Officer for NRC & Representation and Custodian/ Alternate Custodian — to take all requisite actions w.r.t. APAR Cycle/ APAR process as per the timelines prescribed. Any deviation may be viewed seriously.

5. Help Manuals in the form of step by step guide for different roles as Custodian, Officer Reported Upon, Reporting Officer and Reviewing Officer roles have been uploaded on the homepage of DGHRD website i.e. dghrdcbic.gov.in at HRM1-SPARROW-SPARROW HELP MANUAL for SPARROW-CBIC, which can be referred to.
6. In case of personal staff of Senior Officers viz. Steno/ PS/ Sr. PS etc., the concerned Officer will be the Reporting Officer as well as Reviewing Officer both for the purpose of APAR.

7. It has been observed that many Officers are submitting representations for mistakes/ errors etc. in Section-I of APAR. As per DoPT guidelines, representations can be submitted only for Gradings/ Comments/ Remarks. Representations cannot also be submitted for non- reporting/ non-reviewing of APAR. Representation should not be submitted in case APAR has been force forwarded from both reporting and reviewing authority stages. In such a case, said APAR has to be accepted by the officer reported upon and finally closed by the custodian. A manual NRC for said period has to be created and forwarded to this office so that it can be uploaded to the portal.
8. Level jumping of the Officers in hierarchal setup of working for the purpose of APAR Reporting or Reviewing has been observed w.r.t. Workflow of APAR (for example: Commissioner is made the Reporting Officer for a Superintendent). This is not an acceptable practice. It directly affects the APAR chain, as then, there will be no further higher officer available for further actions w.r.t. APAR process (so as to complete all APAR steps/actions at the Commissionerate/ Zonal Level), It may be ensured that the APARs upto the grade of Superintendent be reviewed by the Officers upto the grade of Additional Commissioner/ Commissioner only.
9. For Officers working on regular Deputation, whether within or outside the department, the APAR practice followed in the deputation organization will be followed. In such cases, parent office/cadre/ parent zone is **not** to initiate APAR of such officer of the deputation period.
10. For Officers working on loan basis in some other Formation, it is ideal that the Custodian of the Formation where officer is presently working on loan basis initiates the APAR in SPARROW-CBIC.
11. In SPARROW-CBIC, respective Custodians have been given the APAR Retrieval rights of the Officers mapped in their formation. Considering the sensitivity and confidential nature of APAR records, the Custodians are expected to exercise due care and precaution in this regard. Custodian can access/ retrieve the APARs of Officers/Staff of his respective formation for official purposes. It is also necessary that the Officers/Staff in SPARROW-CBIC are correctly mapped/reflected in their present formation (so that their APARs are available to the concerned Custodian). In case of transfer of officers, Custodians/ Alternate Custodian should immediately inform the same to DGHRD (through email help.sparrowcbic@gov.in), for updation in SPARROW- CBIC database.
12. It is expected that one formation (either CCO or a setup headed by Commissioner/ ADG) should have only one Custodian and few Alternate Custodians. The following w.r.t. the Custodian and Alternate Custodians are suggested:

12.1. **CCOs and GST Commissionerates:**

- For CCO: 1 Super Custodian, 1 Custodian and 1 or 2 Alternate Custodians.
- For a Commissionerate: 1 Custodian for whole Commissionerate and 1 or 2 Alternate Custodian for Comm'rte Hqrs.
- For a Sub-Comm'rte: 1 or 2 Alternate Custodian(s)
- For each Division: 1 or 2 Alternate Custodian(s).

(The said Alternate Custodian at Divisional Level shall cater to the Divisional office as well as the Ranges under the Division).

12.1.1. **Audit Commissionerates:**

- For a Commissionerate : 1 Custodian for whole Commisisonerate and 1 or 2 AlternateCustodians for Commisisonerate Hqrs.
 - For each Audit Circle : 1 Alternate Custodian
- (If the Audit Circles are co-located with the Headquarters Setup, then, the Alternate Custodians of Comm 'rte Hqrs may also cater to Circles).*

12.1.2. **Appeals Commissionerates:**

- 1 Custodian and 1 Alternate Custodian.

12.2. **Directorates/ Directorate General Setups:**

- For Headquarter level : 1 Super Custodian, 1 Custodian and 1 or 2 Alternate Custodians.
 - For Zonal Units : 1 Custodian and 1 or 2 Alternate Custodians.
- (If there are any sub formations like Regional Units or Sub-Regional Units under the ZonalUnit, then 1 Alternate Custodian each for such formation).*

12.3. **Customs Formations:**

- If whole Commissionerate is located in one place with centralized Admin/Establishment : 1 Super Custodian, 1 Custodian and 2 Alternate Custodians.
- If there are Field formations like Division/ CFS/ LCS and the same is at least headed by AC/ DC and is available with necessary IT infrastructure, then, 1 or 2 Alternate Custodians at each such formation may be nominated.

The guiding principle is that for each HoD, there may be one Custodian for whole of thatformation (with 2 Alternate Custodians at HQ) and 1 or 2 Alternate Custodians for each sub- formation where HoO/ Establishment Branch is available. CCO/ Directorate

HQ shall also be treated like HoD formation and Custodian/ Alternate Custodians may be nominated as discussed.

13. In each CCO/ Commissionerate/ Directorate HQ/ Directorate Zonal Unit, an Officer of JC/ADC level should be nominated as "**Officer In-charge (SPARROW)**". He/she will be responsible for the overall supervision of the functioning of both SPARROW systems (i.e., SPARROW-IRS and SPARROW-CBIC in that formation), as well as for ensuring completion of all APAR related actions/ process in time and properly. The "Officer In-charge (SPARROW)" should ensure that all the Concerned Custodians & Alternate Custodians and Individual Officers under them, have ensured the required action at their end as per the timelines. Further, that the concerned Reporting/Reviewing Officers are writing the APARs as per timelines prescribed.
14. For any issues/ problems relating to SPARROW/APAR filing or for data updation requests, e-mails may be sent at help.sparrowcbic@gov.in.
15. Apart from strictly adhering to the timelines, it needs to be emphasized upon all the **Reporting/Reviewing officers that APARs must be written with due care and attention, keeping in mind APAR related instructions**. There have been instances where many columns are not filled properly and gradings are given without proper justification. Further, the details in Section-I needs to be filled properly and completely by the Custodian. The duration/period under the Reporting/Reviewing Officers as well as other details in Section-I needs to be filled completely and correctly.
16. It should be ensured that each and every officer's APAR covering the whole APAR year 2024-2025 is complete.
17. Most importantly, it should be ensured that entire processes of APAR Cycle 2024-2025 - Reporting, Reviewing, Officer disclosure/Acceptance/representation, disposal of representation as per prescribed procedure is complete and final closure of APARs in the system is completed within the stipulated timelines as prescribed by DoPT (**Annexure 'A'**).
18. It is requested that these instructions may be brought to the notice of all Officers/ Staff in your jurisdiction, for necessary action and strict compliance.

Yours faithfully,



(Alok Jha)

Pr. Additional Director General

ANNEXURE 'A'

Time schedule for writing/completion of online APAR 2024-25 in SPARROW-CBIC
(Reporting year- Financial year)

S.No	Activity	Date by which to be completed
1.	Generation/Creation of blank APAR in SPARROW-CBIC by the Custodian and sending it to all concerned (i.e. to officer to be reported upon where self- appraisal has to be given and to Reporting Officers where self appraisal is not to be given)	31 st March, 2025 (This may be completed even a week earlier)
2.	Submission of self-appraisal to reporting officer by Officer to be Reported Upon (where applicable)	15 th April, 2025
3.	Submission of report by Reporting Officer to Reviewing Officer	30 th June, 2025
4.	Report to be completed by Reviewing Officer and to be sent to CR Section (Custodian)	31 st July, 2025
5.	Disclosure to the Officer Reported Upon	1 st September, 2025
6.	Receipt of Representation, if any, On APAR	15 days from the date of receipt of communication
7.	Forwarding of Representations to the Competent Authority (Nodal Officer for Representation) at Stage-I	21 st September, 2025
8.	Forwarding of representation by the Competent Authority (Nodal Officer for Representation) to Reporting Officer	23 rd September, 2025
9.	Forwarding of representation by the Reporting Officer to Reviewing Officer	1 st October, 2025
10.	Forwarding of representation by the Reviewing Officer to Competent Authority (Nodal Officer for Representation) at Stage-II	11 th October, 2025

11.	Disposal of Representation by the Representation Deciding Authority and uploading of Order/ decision by the Nodal Officer for Representation in SPARROW-CBIC (at Competent Authority Stage-II)	20 th October, 2025
12.	Communication of the decision on the Representation to the Officer Reported Upon by the Custodian (CR Section)	31 st October, 2025
13.	End of entire APAR process, after which the APAR will be finally taken on record (Closure of APAR cycle 2024-25 in SPARROW-CBIC)	30 th November, 2025