



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Tea Research Association

Third Party Audit under RTI Act, 2005 for 2023 -24

TRA after it was constituted in 1964, was taken under the wings of the CSIR laboratories and was classified as a research institute by the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) for which necessary recognition was given to it for Income Tax purposes under Section 35 (1) (ii) of the I.T. Act, 1961 which it still enjoys.

TRA, the Public Authority, has provided for an exclusive link for RTI disclosure on its website which is accessible at <https://www.tocklai.org/rti-act/>. A list of 16 manuals as provided for under section 4 (1) (b) of the RTI Act, 2005 has been listed on its website. In addition, Financial Reports, Transparency Audit Report and TRA Budget for various years have been placed in public domain under the aforementioned link.

From the available records as accessible, it is clear that the PA has taken up third party audit from a third-party auditor in 2017 and has been disclosed. The audits for the later years, however, are not available in public domain.

In respect of disclosure under section 4 (1) (b) (ii), it has been apparently stated to convey perhaps that the delegation of powers of its officers exists, however, they have not been placed in public domain. Further, it has also stated that action is being initiated to amend the existing delegation of powers of the officers and statutory committees of the Board wherever necessary. The PA should review its decision and by the time the amended delegation of power are readied, extant delegation in the meantime, may be placed in public domain.

In respect of channel of supervision, TRA, has simply copied the statement without providing any substantive disclosure. This may be reviewed by the PA. The intent of the suo moto disclosure is to disclose as much information as may be possible and not only to mention unrelated or irrelevant information. There has been no disclosure regarding

the statement of categories of documents that are held by it or under its control, Besides, while making disclosure about details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form, it states that TRA has taken steps to store the general information in an electronic form. Such disclosures are of now consequences at all. In addition, PA, has just provided common gradation list against the directory of its officers and employees. This is not sufficient. The idea behind disclosure of directory of employees is to make the stakeholders aware is to know who the officers are, where are they posted, what work do they supervise/perform, and the manner of their being accessible to the public at large.

The PA has designated same officer as a CPIO and the Appellate Authority (AA) without making any jurisdictional clarification regarding the officers' performing the duties of CPIO and Appellate Authority. In general, such an arrangement of a CPIO and AA may act counterproductive for the organisation.

All in all, efforts of the PA for disclosing information under section 4 (1) (b) of the RTI Act, 2005 is appreciable, however, they must be done in true spirit and in its entirety. PA may like to review the disclosures.