

No. 17015/08/2023-IS-I  
 Government of India  
 Ministry of Home Affairs  
 Internal Security-I Division  
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2169

4.11.24

North Block, New Delhi  
 Dated: 25<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2024

## OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Sub: Vetting of credentials of consultants - regd.**

The undersigned is directed to state that concerns have been raised by Central Security Agency on engagement of consultants for sensitive work of Government. It has been noticed that, some consultants hired by Ministries/Departments for sensitive work have been found to be in touch with Foreign Missions and providing them with sensitive inputs on policy matters. In some cases, consultants were found to have been hired directly for sensitive work immediately after a stint in a Foreign Mission. Some consultants were provided unrestricted access to official computers of senior officers, as well as sensitive internal deliberations, for which special security clearance and briefing is mandatory. Consultants were found working on sensitive official documents while travelling. A consultant was found to be in a relationship with a foreign diplomat, spending long hours in the residence of the diplomat within the foreign mission premises. The consultant was found preparing official reports in the presence of the diplomat, besides attending to regular work on the official laptop from within the Mission premises. These are serious lapses.

2. Accordingly, in view of the above, it is requested to ensure that before engaging a consultant on contractual/consultancy basis on sensitive work, all Ministries/Departments may include in their procedure to be followed the following steps:

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*Emp. Ret.*  
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*by*
- (i) Ministries, may themselves carefully vet the Consultants, including technical experts, hired for sensitive work before their appointment.
  - (ii) The credentials of consultants, including technical experts, hired for sensitive policy level work may be shared beforehand with the Ministry of Home Affairs.
  - (iii) In case a retired Government servant is being hired, vigilance clearance may be obtained beforehand from the respective Ministry/Department.
  - (iv) Individuals working in Foreign Missions to be considered for hiring only after a two-year cooling off period.

*For compliance pt -*  
*Let discuss*

*contents of Agreement*  
*with Nerva staff also / quill pt.*  
*DSIA*  
*STN*

(v) Non-Disclosure Agreement to be signed by consultants before hiring to include a mandatory two-year cooling off period post their Government contract completion, if they intend to join foreign Missions/firms/think tanks.

(vi) Mandatory security briefing of consultants, including dos and don'ts from the security perspective, including precautions to be taken while working from home.

(vii) Strict access control and need to know norms to be followed in the Ministries/Departments in allowing Consultant's access to meetings, information, documents, computers etc.

3. The above instructions may kindly be noted for strict compliance.



(Rajiv Sharma)

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India

Tel: 011-23092085

To,

Secretaries of all the Ministries/Departments of GoI.