Guidelines for Indian Government Websites

GIGW

Compliance
&
Certification

Handbook

About the Document

As the world adopts the Internet media for delivery of information and services, it becomes necessary to establish standards that serve as a frame of reference to guide construction efforts in the virtual world. The Government of India's National Informatics Center (NIC) has devised such standards in the form of **Guidelines for Indian Government Websites** (**GIGW**). These guidelines have become an integral part of the **Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure** (**CSMOP**), and have also been adopted by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances** (**DARPG**).

To help Indian Government websites become compliant with GIGW, a detailed manual is available to registered users at the website **http://guidelines.gov.in**, a helpdesk is available during office hours on all working days, and regular workshops are conducted by NIC.

The purpose of this document is to augment the GIGW manual and serve as a ready reference of all relevant information in one place for all stakeholders of Government websites, who need to ensure their websites comply with GIGW. This document helps clearly understand various aspects that can ensure GIGW compliance & aid in completion of the certification process.
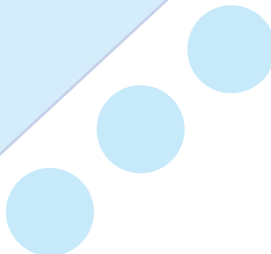
Contents

1

Background

In the last two decades, our human world has seen a new parallel universe emerge along with the widening of Internet's reach. The Internet ensures that citizens who seek information and services can do so without having to visit a physical brick-and-mortar government office, and without being constrained by limited office/working hours, by simply visiting the government office's website from anywhere at any time!

This seemingly simple e-enabling to deliver government's information and services requires significant effort by various stakeholders of the government office's website so that the citizens' lives benefit truly through rendering of information & services in an accurate, efficient, relevant, timely manner. The website stakeholders operating behind the scenes need to bear in mind aspects of the human computer interface carefully so that all citizens, including those with different abilities are able to feel facilitated vs hindered.

To use an analogy, in a brick-and-mortar world having multiple storey structures, in addition to a staircase, an elevator is built to enable accessibility to all storeys by citizens, including those with limited limb movement. Or, even in single-storey structures, along with a flight of stairs, a ramp is built with supporting hand-railings to enable a citizen navigating on a wheelchair to travel between two levels.

In the case of websites, being considerate to the needs of all citizens, including those with different abilities, such as audio-visual impairments, information & services are rendered in a manner that allows access by all. For example, a government website can make available the text transcript of an audio so that audio-impaired citizens can read it, or the same transcript can be read by assistive technologies like screen readers to help visually challenged citizens to access the information conveniently. All such simple yet significant measures show the government's responsiveness towards the needs of its citizens, and its intent of being inclusive in delivering the benefits of governance to all, without discriminating on the basis of abilities, access to bandwidth, technology etc.

In keeping with the above philosophy and to set a minimum benchmark for all government websites 'Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW)' were formulated by National Informatics Centre (NIC). GIGW was adopted by the Department of Administrative Reform and Public Grievances (DARPG), and made an integral part of the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure (CSMOP) in January 2009 to ensure Indian Government websites conform to the UUU trilogy, viz., user-centric, user-friendly, & universally accessible.

2

What is Compliance with GIGW

Compliance with GIGW ensures that a website is user-centric, usable, & universally accessible at all stages: starting from launch, continuing during its operations &maintenance.

GIGW promotes standards that are broadly placed in three categories: **advisory, mandatory, & voluntary**. Mandatory standards are the minimum criteria that every website MUST meet; advisory standards are the guidelines that websites SHOULD endeavor to comply with; & voluntary standards are those which websites MAY adopt based on their discretion.

GIGW Compliance matrix provides a checklist of 115 mandatory guidelines/checkpoints. Majority of these checkpoints relate to the front end of the website (accessibility, identity, content, and design) while others relate to backend policies, processes and plans to enable better management of websites. These 115 checkpoints are exhaustive and cover all the possible scenarios that may apply to the entire universe of government websites. There may be few government websites to which each of the 115 checkpoints may be applicable. A majority of government websites may be such that while most of the 115 checkpoints would apply, some checkpoints may not be applicable.

Website stakeholders need to ensure compliance with the mandatory guidelines that are applicable for the particular website in such a manner that the:

- user interface is fully compliant • backend policies are honored fully

Once a website conforms to the applicable mandatory guidelines, the owner department must apply to **Standardisation Testing and Quality Certification** (**STQC**) for GIGW compliance certification.

3
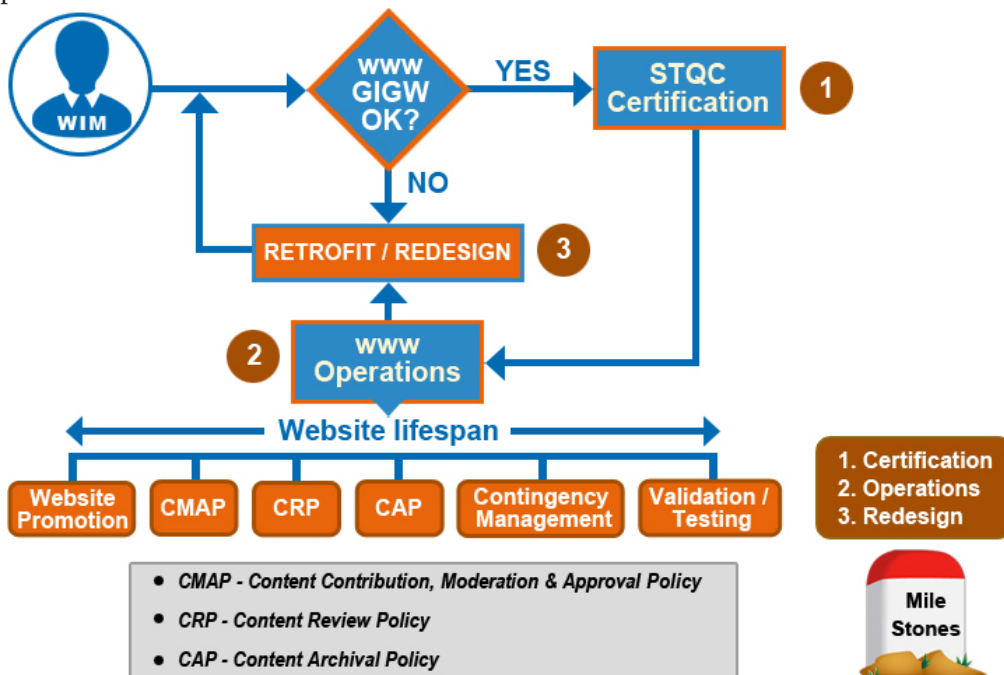
Roles & Responsibilities of Website Stakeholders

The responsibility to ensure GIGW compliance is shared between 3 stakeholders:
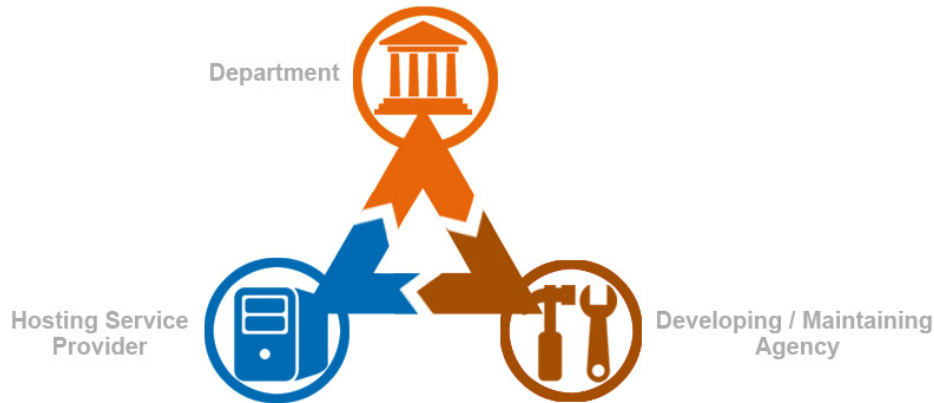
In addition certain guidelines related to issues like accessibility and content authenticity and currency will be systemically complied with, if a Content Management System (CMS) is adopted, which is recommended as a best practice.

Department

Department is the owner of the website, responsible for initiating design, content creation, review, modification, archiving etc, and managing operations through website lifecycle, with the help of other stakeholders like development agency & hosting service provider.

A Government department can initiate steps towards GIGW compliance by designating a Web Information Manager (WIM), at the level of Joint Secretary, who spearheads the department's website initiative. A WIM is responsible for deliverables such as:

- Approving all policies to handle legal aspects such as copyright, hyperlinking, privacy etc
- Approving all policies for effective management of the website's content, as required by GIGW: content moderation, review, and archival
- Approving processes and plans to effectively monitor the website and handle any contingencies
- Ensuring effective promotion of the department's website

Developing/Maintaining Agency

Development Agencies act as per the mandate from the Government department, and contribute technical expertise to design, develop & maintain department websites.

The department can engage the services of a Developing / Maintaining agency to ensure the department website is developed to comply with GIGW guidelines not just at the time of website launch, but through the life of the website in the listed ways:

- All content is universally accessible
- Government identity and the department's lineage is prominently displayed through the proper use of emblem, flag etc.

January - 2014

- Prescribed minimum content and functionality as stipulated by GIGW is present on the website e.g., Feedback, Help, Search, Sitemap etc.

Hosting Service Provider

Hosting Service Providers offer hosting services to ensure secure, reliable, robust availability of Government department websites.

The Hosting Service Provider can ensure GIGW compliance by providing infrastructure to enable :

- Multi-tier security
- Effective & regular backups
- Disaster recovery

Collective efforts of all stakeholders to fulfill their respective responsibilities can help deliver the desired common goal: websites that truly serve interests of all visitors!

Refer Appendix i - Demystifying the GIGW Compliance Matrix to see details of the mapping between specific GIGW guidelines that are complied with, by design through action by various functional owners, such as Government department, developing/maintaining agency, and hosting service provider.

Refer Appendix ii - Achieving GIGW Compliance using a Content Management System (CMS) to see how a Content Management System (CMS) can help comply with GIGW guidelines specific to Accessibility, Content Scope and Quality, Visual Identity, Consistent page layouts design etc.

Refer Appendix iii - SUGAM Web Editions to see editions, that aim to engage all stakeholders who are involved in delivering eGovernance in a meaningful way to ensure **S**ustainable **U**ser-centric **G**overnance through **A**ccessible and **M**anaged websites.

4

Policy Templates for STQC Certification

To keep delivering government information and services with consistently good quality through a department's website, while continually conforming to GIGW guidelines, it is important to establish a framework of "ground rules" that can be clearly understood & honored by all website stakeholders in both the design and daily operations of the website. These ground rules consider all factors that may impact the website content's accuracy, its validity, accessibility, website security, up-time etc. To enable all government website stakeholders to adopt a consistent and tested framework, so that uniformity can be maintained, a set of template policies has been devised. These templates can be suitably customized to reflect specific details of each website. Conformance in letter and spirit to these policies included in the handbook would ensure that the website meets the citizen expectation at all times: authentic, accurate, easily accessible information from a credible source such as an official Government website.

Legal   Quality

Strategy & Operations

LEGAL	QUALITY	STRATEGY & OPERATIONS
■ Copyright Policy ■ Hyperlinking Policy ■ Terms & Conditions ■ Privacy Policy	■ Content Contribution, Moderation, and Approval Policy (CMAP) ■ Content Review Policy (CRP) ■ Content Archival Policy (CAP)	■ Security Policy ■ Validation & Testing Process ■ Contingency Management Plan & Disaster Recovery Process ■ Performance Evaluation & Monitoring Process

January - 2014

4a
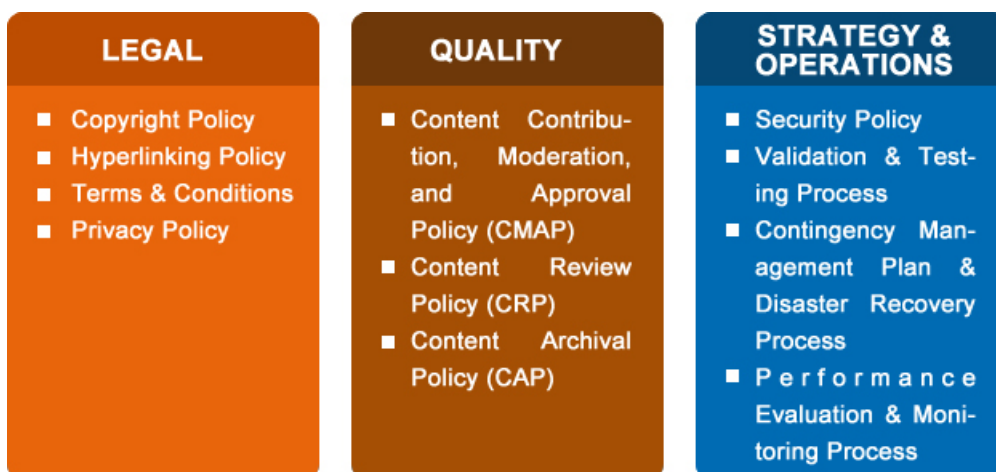
Content Archival Policy (CAP)

Purpose:

Government websites generally are storehouses of a large number of documents and reports, which are of relevance and importance to specific audiences as well as citizens at large. Many times, these documents also have historical importance and are also referred extensively for academic and research purposes. These documents can be kept for online access only for a specific period of time and need to be moved to offline archives on the expiry of the pre-decided duration. This is important since these old documents sometimes need to be referred to for regulatory or legal purposes.

The Departments MUST have a clear-cut Archival Policy with regard to such old documents stating for how long would they be kept online, when would they be moved to offline archives and if/when would they be permanently deleted or purged.

Content Archival Policy (clauses 10.4, 5.2.6)

The <section names e.g., visitor statistics, newsletter and spotlight items> will be online archived automatically after entering <yth year> from the date of their publishing.

<Name of Ministry / Department / Organization> maintains online archives for a period of <x years> to allow for the retrieval of content which has expired.

<Schemes, Tenders, Forms, Recruitment Notices> which have been withdrawn, or discontinued, or have exceeded <x years> after archiving, may be expunged.
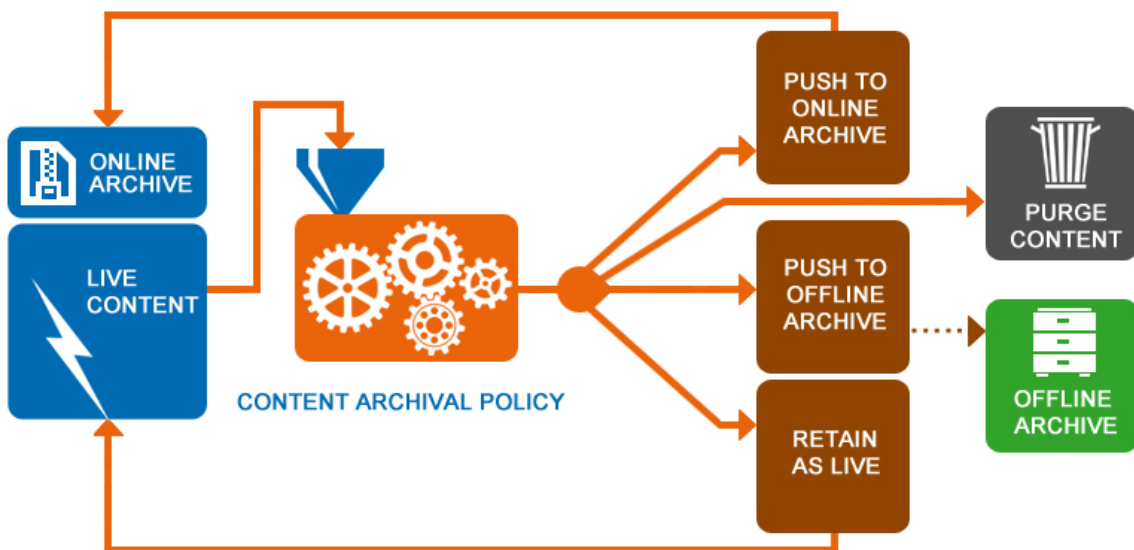
4b

Content Contribution, Moderation, & Approval Policy (CMAP)

Purpose:

Each and every bit of content published on a Government website should be verified and checked thoroughly as the public expects nothing less than authentic and accurate information from a credible source such as an official Government website.

The Departments MUST have a Content Contribution, Moderation and Approval Policy (CMAP) stating the responsibility, authorisation and workflow details with regard to content publishing on the site.

Scope:

- Departments/Agencies must have a (documented) process and audit trail to ensure that content has an appropriate authorization from within the Department/Agency before being published to the website
- The documentation at minimum must show who has the authority to approve content and track the approval for each content item (showing who approved and when)
- Depending on the scale of a website, a suitable Content Contribution, Moderation and Approval Policy (CMAP) structure may be adopted.

This can be implemented easily by assigning workflow roles in the Content Management System.

Content Contribution, Moderation & Approval Policy (clause 5.2.1)

Policy Statement for 2-tiered CMAP structure (for small websites)

The <Website / Portal / Web Application> of <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization> represents a single department where most content is contributed by a single set of sources. We hereby adopt a 2-tiered structure to implement CMAP requiring minimum 2 officials to execute the CMAP roles, viz.,

- Contributor
- Moderator/Approver

Template to implement 2-tiered CMAP structure for small websites

SECTIONS	ROLES	
	CONTRIBUTOR	MODERATOR & APPROVER
Home page		
News, Press Releases, Recruitments, Tenders etc		
Who's Who, Organization Chart, Circulars/Notifications	<Preferably Admin/ Personnel Deptt>	<Preferably HOD Admin/Personnel>
Acts, Documents, Forms, Reports etc		

Policy Statement for 3-tiered CMAP structure (for large websites)

The <Website/Portal/Web Application> of <Name of Ministry/ Department / Organization> represents multiple divisions/departments. We hereby adopt a 3-tiered structure to implement CMAP needing minimum 3 officials to execute the CMAP roles, viz.,

- Contributor
- Moderator
- Approver

Template to implement 3-tiered CMAP structure for large websites

SECTIONS	ROLES		
	CONTRIBUTOR	MODERATOR	APPROVER
Home & common sections e.g., FAQs, Help etc			
Who's Who, Organization Chart, Circulars / Notifications	<Preferably Admin/Personnel Deptt>	<Preferably Admin/Personnel Deptt HoD>	<Preferably Web Information Manager>
<Section2: Department 1>	<Preferably Deptt-1>	<Preferably HOD>	<Preferably Web Information Manager>
<Section 3: Department 2>	<Preferably Deptt-2>		

4c

Copyright Policy

Purpose

Copyright is a form of protection provided under law to the owners of "original works of authorship" in any form or media. It is implied that the original information put up on the website by a Government Department is by default a copyright of the owner Department and may be copied, reproduced, republished, uploaded, posted, transmitted, or distributed only if the copyright policy of the concerned Department allows so. The copyright policy of a Department could be liberal, moderate or conservative depending upon their preferences based on the kind of information available on their website.

However, since it is a duty of a Government Department to provide all the information in the public domain freely to the citizens, the Departments should aim to have a liberal copyright policy.

Copyright policy (clause 3.1.1) Moderate

Material featured on this <Website / Portal / Web Application> may be reproduced free of charge after taking proper permission by sending a mail to us. However, the material has to be reproduced accurately and not to be used in a derogatory manner or in a misleading context. Wherever the material is being published or issued to others, the source must be prominently acknowledged. However, the permission to reproduce this material shall not extend to any material which is identified as being copyright of a third party. Authorisation to reproduce such material must be obtained from the departments/ copyright holders concerned.

These terms and conditions shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the Indian Laws. Any dispute arising under these terms and conditions shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of India.

Copyright policy (clause 3.1.1) Conservative


Material featured on this <Website / Portal / Web Application> may NOT be reproduced under any circumstances.

These terms and conditions shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the Indian Laws. Any dispute arising under these terms and conditions shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of India.

Copyright policy (clause 3.1.1) Liberal

Material featured on this <Website / Portal / Web Application> may be reproduced free of charge. However, the material has to be reproduced accurately and not to be used in a derogatory manner or in a misleading context. Wherever the material is being published or issued to others, the source must be prominently acknowledged. However, the permission to reproduce this material shall not extend to any material which is identified as being copyright of a third party. Authorisation to reproduce such material must be obtained from the departments/copyright holders concerned.
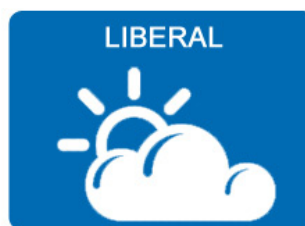
4d

Content Review Policy (CRP)

Purpose:

Every piece of content appearing on the Government website should be reviewed after a pre-decided duration for its accuracy, relevance and currency. All Government Departments MUST formulate a proper web Content Review Policy (CRP) depending upon the nature of their content and if possible also publish the policy on their website.

Content Review Policy (CRP) (clause 5.2.3)

The <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> is the face of the Government disseminating government information and services. This content Review Policy has been formulated to keep the content on the <Website / Portal / Web Application> current and up-to-date. Since the type of the content on the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> varies, different Review timelines are defined for the diverse content elements.

This Review Policy is based on different types of content elements, their validity and relevance as well as the archival policy.

As a general rule:

- The entire website content shall be reviewed in a phased manner over a period of <x months> to ensure the currency of the content. The exception to the above is listed below:

Content Review Timeline

SECTION	REVIEW PERIODICITY
Home Page	<periodicity e.g.,Daily>
News Page	Daily
Who's who list	As and when required
Newsletter, Circulars, Notifications etc	No review required
Acts, Rules	<periodicity e.g., 1 year>

4e
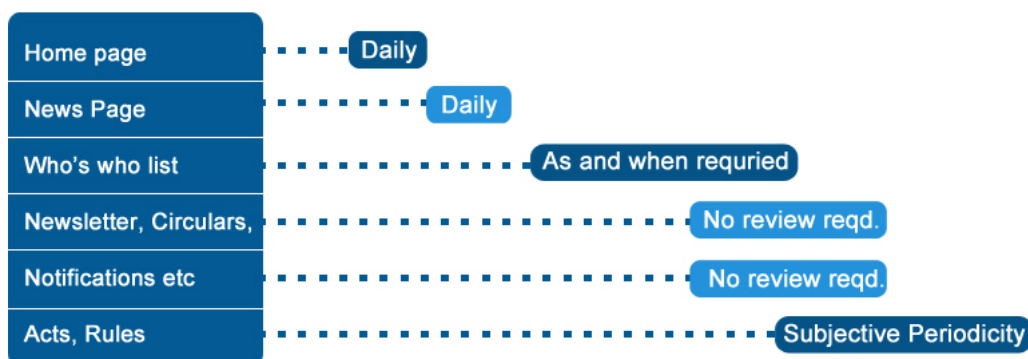
Contingency Management Plan & Disaster Recovery Process

Purpose:

The website of a Government Department is its presence on the Internet and it is very important that the site is fully functional at all times. It is expected of the Government websites to deliver information and services on a 24x7 basis. Hence, all efforts should be made to minimise the downtime of the website as far as possible.

It is therefore necessary that a proper Contingency Plan MUST be prepared in advance to handle any eventualities and restore the site in the shortest possible time.

Contingency Management Plan & Disaster Recovery Process (clause 8.3)

<Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> has been placed in protected zones with implementation of firewalls and IDS (Intrusion Detection System) and high availability solutions.

(i) Defacement Protection

- <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> is audited for protection against Security & Performance degradation.
- Any application level modification on the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> requires re-audit.
- All the server configuration and logs are monitored timely.
- Only System administrator users are allowed to access the servers for doing administration and configuration tasks.
- All the backend servers are under lock and net secured.
- Contents are updated through a <secure FTP using VPN / CMS>.

(ii) Monitoring

There are <two> ways of monitoring of defacement of <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application>.

- Cyber security division monitors by analyzing the log files.
- <Website Monitoring Team specifics> also monitors the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> after interval of every <frequency> for possible defacement or undesirable change in the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application>. (in case the site has a dedicated monitoring team)

(iii) Defacement Response Plan

In case of any eventuality who ever notices the defacement (either Website Monitoring Team or Cyber Security) informs the Web Information Manager on phone as well as through mail. NIC Cyber Security Division or Help Desk also informs the Administrator <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> on telephone and also by mail.

S. NO.	PERSON IN CHARGE	DESIGNATION	MAIL ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER
1.	<Name>			
2.	<Name>			
3.	<Name>			

As soon as the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> Server Administrator gets the information regarding the defacement, s/he takes the following steps.

- According to the degree of defacement, the site is stopped or continued partially.
- Log files are analyzed to troubleshoot the source of defacement and blocking of the service.
- Type of the defacement is analyzed and fixed.
- The Portal Service is started from DR site in case of complete loss of data or during long downtime.
- Log files are given to security division for analysis.
- Based on security recommendation, all vulnerability is fixed and the application is re-audited.
- The affected/corrupted content and the site are restored from the backup.

Time for Restoration after defacement

The time taken for restoration of depends on the degree of defacement and services affected by the defacement. Ideally it will take <x hours> for the restoration.

(iv) Natural Calamity Response Plan

There could be circumstances whereby due to some natural calamity (it may due to any reason that is beyond control of any person), the entire data centre where the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> has been hosted gets destroyed or ceases to exist. In such case first of all the In-charge of National Data Centre will declare the natural calamity and would instruct the sites to be started from the DR site, which is located at <Name of Data Center Location>.

4f

Hyperlinking Policy

Purpose:

Since Government websites receive queries and requests from owners of other websites who might want to provide a hyperlink to their web pages, every Indian Government website must have a comprehensive and clear-cut hyperlinking policy defined and spelt out for those who wish to hyperlink content from any of its sections. The hyperlinking policy enumerates the detailed criteria and guidelines with respect to hyperlinks with other sites. The basic hyperlinking practices and rules should ideally be common across the websites of a any Government entity e.g., State/Ministry.

Hyperlinking policy (clause 3.2.1)

Links to external websites/portals

At many places in this <Website / Portal / Web Application>, you shall find links to other <Websites/ Portals/Web applications/Mobile apps>. These links have been placed for your convenience. <Department Name> is not responsible for the contents of the linked destinations and does not necessarily endorse the views expressed in them. Mere presence of the link or its listing on this <Website / Portal / Web Application> should not be assumed as endorsement of any kind. We can not guarantee that these links will work all the time and we have no control over availability of linked destinations.

Links to <Website / Portal / Web Application> by other websites

We do not object to you linking directly to the information that is hosted on this <Website / Portal / Web Application> and no prior permission is required for the same. However, we would like you to inform us about any links provided to this <Website / Portal / Web Application> so that you can be informed of any changes or updates therein. Also, we do not permit our pages to be loaded into frames on your site. The pages belonging to this <Website / Portal / Web Application> must load into a newly opened browser window of the User.

4g

Performance Evaluation & Monitoring Process

Purpose:

Hosting Service Provider should provide web server statistics required for performance evaluation on a regular basis. If possible, online access to the traffic analysis should be provided so that the Department can access the traffic analysis at any point of time for the purpose of evaluation.

Performance Evaluation & Monitoring Process (clause 8.2.1 h)

(i) Application Performance

Application performance is regularly monitored using <CMS-specific tools, or other tools> avaiable to application administrator.

This may include CMS specific Status Report (which is comprehensive report based on various parameters of application availability, security, performance and access restrictions) OR list any other reports available with the tools being used to monitor application performance.

(ii) Server Performance

Host of servers including webserver and database servers are monitored periodically to ensure high availability and smooth functioning of the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application>.

(iii) Download Speeds

- Frequency: <frequency e.g., daily / weekly etc>
- Process: Using the open source tools and add-ons available with browsers <like Firebug's netstat for Mozilla> the download speed of pages across portal are checked on different Internet connectivity.
- Pages are tested at various connections and slow loading pages are identified and corrected (once)

(iv) Availability of Portal

Availability of <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> is monitored at intervals of <frequency> by the <Website Monitoring team (if there is a dedicated monitoring team)>. Homepage and important landing pages have been marked and provided to monitoring team for regular check.

4h

Privacy Policy

Purpose:

In case a Department solicits or collects personal information from visitors through their websites, it MUST incorporate a prominently displayed Privacy Statement clearly stating the purpose for which information is being collected, whether the information shall be disclosed to anyone for any purpose and to whom.

Privacy Policy (clause 3.4.2)

<Name of Website / Portal / Web Application (e.g, India Portal, DoT website, TRAI website, IRCTC etc)> does not automatically capture any specific personal information from you (like name, phone number or e-mail address), that allows us to identify you individually. If you choose to provide us with your personal information, like names or addresses, when you visit our website, we use it only to fulfil your request for information. To use the <*xyz section(s)*>, this website <*requires user registration/does not require registration*. <[If user registration is required] **Information so collected is used to facilitate interaction**>.

We do not sell or share any personally identifiable information volunteered on this site to any third party (public/private). Any information provided to this website will be protected from loss, misuse, unauthorized access or disclosure, alteration, or destruction.

We gather certain information about the User, such as Internet protocol (IP) address, domain name, browser type, operating system, the date and time of the visit and the pages visited. We make no attempt to link these addresses with the identity of individuals visiting our site unless an attempt to damage the site has been detected.

Use of Cookies:

A cookie is a piece of software code that an internet web site sends to your browser when you access information at that site. A cookie is stored as a simple text file on your computer or mobile device by a website's server and only that server will be able to retrieve or read the contents of that cookie. Cookies let you navigate between pages efficiently as they store your preferences, and generally improve your experience of a website.

<We are using following types of cookies in our site:
- *Analytics cookies for anonymously remembering your computer or mobile device when you visit our website to keep track of browsing patterns.*
- *Service cookies for helping us to make our website work efficiently, remembering your registration and login details, settings preferences, and keeping track of the pages you view.*

- *Non-persistent cookies a.k.a per-session cookies. Per-session cookies serve technical purposes, like providing seamless navigation through this website. These cookies do not collect personal information on users and they are deleted as soon as you leave our website. The cookies do not permanently record data and they are not stored on your computer's hard drive. The cookies are stored in memory and are only available during an active browser session. Again, once you close your browser, the cookie disappears.>*

<You may note additionally that when you visit sections of <Website / Portal / Application> where you are prompted to log in, or which are customizable, you may be required to accept cookies. If you choose to have your browser refuse cookies, it is possible that some sections of our web site may not function properly.>

4i

Security Policy

Purpose:

Security is of paramount concern to owners as well as consumers of the website. A lot of security threats are handled at data centres and server administrator level where the website/application is hosted. Website/Application developers should however be sensitive about security aspects, as a lot of security threats arise due to vulnerability of application software code.

These application driven attacks sometimes turn out to be quite fatal. Best Practices to follow while developing web applications using various technologies are available on CERT-IN website (http:// www.cert-in.org.in) as well as in internet space. Developers should read, understand and follow these Best Practices during development. NIC as well as CERT. IN have empaneled a number of agencies to conduct the security audit of applications.

Security policy (clause 8.3.1)

- <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> has been placed in protected zones with implementation of firewalls and IDS (Intrusion Detection System) and high availability solutions.

- Before launch of the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application>, simulated penetration tests have been conducted. Penetration testing has also been conducted <x times> after the launch of the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application>.

- <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> has been audited for known application level vulnerabilities before the launch and all the known vulnerability has been addressed.

- Hardening of servers has been done as per the guideline of Cyber Security division before the launch of the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application>.

- Access to web servers hosting the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> is restricted both physically and through the network as far as possible.

- Logs at <x number> different locations are maintained for authorized physical access of <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> servers.

- Web-servers hosting the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> are configured behind IDS, IPS (Intrusion Prevention System) and with system firewalls on them.

- All the development work is done on separate development environment and is well tested on staging server before updating it on the production server.

- After testing properly on the staging server the applications are uploaded to the production server using SSH and VPN through a single point.
- The content contributed by/from remote locations is duly authenticated & is not published on the production server directly. Any content contributed has to go through the moderation process before final publishing to the production server.
- All contents of the web pages are checked for intentional or unintentional malicious content before final upload to web server pages.
- Audit and Log of all activities involving the operating system, access to the system, and access to applications are maintained and archived. All rejected accesses and services are logged and listed in exception reports for further scrutiny.
- Help Desk staff at the <Identify Monitoring Team> monitor the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> at intervals of <frequency> to check the web pages to confirm that the web pages are up and running, that no unauthorized changes have been made, and that no unauthorized links have been established.
- All newly released system software patches; bug fixes and upgrades are expediently and regularly reviewed and installed on the web server.
- On Production web servers, Internet browsing, mail and any other desktop applications are disabled. Only server administration related task is performed.
- Server passwords are changed at the interval of <x number> months and are shared by <y number> persons <a name> and <b name>.
- <a name> and <b name> have been designated as Administrator for the <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> and shall be responsible for implementing this policy for each of the web servers. The administrator shall also coordinate with the Audit Team for required auditing of the server(s).
- <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> has been re-audited for the application level vulnerability after major modification in application development [Not applicable at first launch].

Compliance Audit

The <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> has been audited before launch and has complied with all the points mentioned in the policies document of the Cyber Security Group mentioned above.

<Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> has also been subjected to an automated risk assessment performed through vulnerability identification software before and after the launch and all the known vulnerabilities have been addressed.

4j

Terms & Conditions

Purpose:

With the increased proliferation of Internet, more and more citizens are accessing information from Government websites. Clearly defined Terms & Conditions including well-worded disclaimers regarding the usage of websites must be present on every Indian Government website. Terms & Conditions address the following aspects:

- Ownership Details
- Usage Policy of Content
- Legal Aspects
- Responsibility towards hyperlinked Sites

Terms & Conditions (clause 3.3.1)

This website is designed, developed and maintained by <Name of Department>, Government of India.

Though all efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy and currency of the content on this website, the same should not be construed as a statement of law or used for any legal purposes. In case of any ambiguity or doubts, users are advised to verify/check with the Department(s) and/or other source(s), and to obtain appropriate professional advice.

Under no circumstances will this Department be liable for any expense, loss or damage including, without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage, or any expense, loss or damage whatsoever arising from use, or loss of use, of data, arising out of or in connection with the use of this website.

These terms and conditions shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the Indian Laws. Any dispute arising under these terms and conditions shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of India.

The information posted on this website could include hypertext links or pointers to information created and maintained by non-Government / private organisations. <Name of Department> is providing these links and pointers solely for your information and convenience. When you select a link to an external website, you are leaving the <Name of Department> website and are subject to the privacy and security policies of the owners/ sponsors of the external website.

<Name of Department> does not guarantee availability of linked pages at all times.

<Name of Department> cannot authorise use of copyrighted materials contained in linked website. Users are advised to request such authorisation from owners of linked websites.

<Name of Department> does not guarantee that linked websites comply with Indian Government Web Guidelines.

4k

Validation & Testing Process

Purpose of the process:

The code of the webpages, scripts and applications may be tested manually or with automated tools to ensure that the quality of web content is maintained and all compliance related guidelines or adhered to.

Validation & Testing Process (clause 10.2.4)

<Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> is tested regularly <manually and through automated testing> tools by the Technical Manager for the following parameters.

(A) Quality Testing

(i) Broken Links

- Frequency: <Daily/Weekly etc>
- Process: <Name of Ministry / Department / Organization Website / Portal / Web Application> is monitored for broken links <manually / automated tool>.
- Action taken : The reviewer sends a list of broken links to the quality manager who rectifies them personally.

(ii) Spelling Errors

- Frequency : <Daily / Weekly etc>
- Process: By the QM <manually / throught automated tool>. It is   the responsibility of the Quality Manager to get the spelling mistakes rectified from the concerned person depending on whether the mistake is in the static or dynamic portion of content.
- Action taken: The Quality Manager sends a mail to the concerned person who rectifies the mistake and responds back to the Quality Manager

(iii) Metadata

- Frequency: <Weekly / Monthly etc>
- Process: Based on the web analyzer tool reports the pages are checked for proper methatags by the Quality Manager
- Action taken: The Quality Manager modifies the metadata if required

(B) Accessibility Testing

Conformance with respect to W3C norms, Tools such as <list available tools> are used for testing.

(C) Functionality Testing

- Frequency: <Weekly / Monthly etc>
- Process: Interactive components like forms etc are tested for functionality issues
- Action taken: The Quality Manager informs concerned person through mail in case of any problem and receives a confirmation mail on rectification of the same.

Appendix - i

Demystifying the GIGW Compliance Matrix

Demystifying the GIGW Compliance Matrix

Content Management System

CMS-Accessibility compliance (6 guidelines)		
S. No.	**Guideline**	**Ref. No.**
1.	All components receive focus in an order that preserves the meaning/operation.	7.5 (m)
2.	Documents are provided either in html or other accessible formats. Instructions / Download details for viewing these formats are provided	7.4.2 (a)
3.	Website is readable even when style sheets are switched off or not loaded.	7.2.2
4.	Web pages allow the user to bypass repeated blocks of content	6.8.8
5.	Web pages allow resizing of text without the use of assistive technology.	6.4.5
6.	Websites provide textual information such as Alt text & Captions to describe non-text elements, such as audio/video clips & multimedia presentations, images etc	6.6.4 6.7.2 (a) 6.7.2 (b)

CMS-Content compliance (10 guidelines)		
S. No.	**Guideline**	**Ref. No.**
1.	Home page and every important entry page of website displays the last updated /reviewed date.	5.2.2
2.	Complete information including title, size (playing time for audio/video), format, usage instructions and plug-in to view the file is provided for downloadable material including documents.	4.4.7 (a) 6.7.1 (a) 6.7.1 (b)
3.	Mechanism is in place to ensure that all the Citizen Services, Forms, Documents and Schemes are registered with the respective repositories of the National Portal.	4.2.13
4.	All Discussion Forums on the website are moderated.	4.3.3 (c)
5.	For every related link, the complete URL of the Home Page/ concerned webpage is provided.	4.3.4 (b)

January - 2014

CMS-Content compliance (contd.)		
S. No.	**Guideline**	**Ref. No.**
6.	Feedback is collected through online forms and mechanism is in place to ensure timely response to feedback/queries received through the website.	4.4.5 (a) 4.4.5 (c)
7.	• Complete & self-explanatory title of the Home page should be provided, and ownership information is displayed on the homepage and on all important entry pages of the website. • Each page is a standalone entity in terms of ownership, navigation and context of content.	2.1.2 2.1.6 6.8.5
8.	With respect to each Act, Circular/Notification, Document, Form, Scheme, Service, Tender/Recruitment notice, the following should be clearly listed in the Website: a. complete official title b. clear description c. language (if not English) d. purpose/procedure to apply (as applicable) e. validity	4.2.3 (b) 4.2.3 (e) 4.2.3 (f) 4.2.4 (b) 4.2.4 (d) 4.2.5 (b) 4.2.5 (c) 4.2.6 (a) 4.2.7 (c) 4.2.7 (e) 4.2.7 (f) 4.2.8 (a) 4.2.8 (d) 4.2.9 (a) 4.2.10 (d)
9.	Metadata for page like title, keywords, description and language is appropriately included.	7.5 (k) 9.1.2
10.	Website's Content Archival Policy is clearly defined to ensure all outdated, irrelevant Announcements, Tenders/Recruitment notices, News/Press Releases are removed from the website and/or placed into the archives	4.2.9 (d) 4.2.10 (g) 4.2.11 4.3.2 (a)

January - 2014

CMS–Design (3 guidelines)		
S. No.	Guideline	Ref. No.
1.	Website uses Cascading Style Sheets to control layouts/styles.	7.2.1
2.	All pages on the website have a link to the home page.	6.8.1
3.	• A consistent page layout & navigation scheme is used throughout the website. • Navigation items are positioned consistently on all pages, and addressed using consistent terminology.	6.2.1 6.8.2

CMS-Maintenance (2 guidelines)		
S. No.	Guideline	Ref. No.
1.	Mechanism is in place to ensure that there are no 'broken links' (internal as well as external) or 'Page not found' errors.	3.2.9
2.	The mechanism is in place to check the accuracy of Hyperlinked Content	3.2.8 4.3.4

Department

Department (4 guidelines)		
S. No.	**Guideline**	**Ref. No.**
1.	Department has nominated a Web Information Manager as defined in the guidelines.	10.1.1
2.	It has been ensured that all stationery of the department as well as advertisements/public messages issued by the concerned Department prominently display the URL of the web site.	9.2.1 9.2.2
3.	Due permissions have been obtained for publishing any content protected by copyright.	3.1.4
4.	Website should have clearly defined policies and plans such as those listed below, and these should be duly approved by Head of Department: Copyright Content Contribution, Moderation & Approval (CMAP) Content Archival (CAP) Content Review (CRP) Hyperlinking Monitoring Privacy Terms & Conditions	3.1.1 3.2.1 3.3.1 3.3.3 3.3.4 3.4.2 5.2.1 5.2.3 5.2.6 10.3 10.4 10.7

Development

Development (37 guidelines including 18 for accessibility)		
S. No.	**Guideline**	**Ref. No.**
1.	Information structure and relationship is preserved in all presentation styles. The meaningful reading sequence is preserved in all presentation styles.	5.6.2 5.6.3
2.	Role of all interface components can be programmatically determined.	7.5 (n)
3.	Data tables have been provided with necessary tags/markup.	7.5 (l)
4.	Changing the setting of a component does not change the context unless the user has been informed of the same.	7.5 (j)
5.	When any component receives focus it does not initiate change in context.	7.5 (i)
6.	All input errors are flashed in text.	7.5 (e)
7.	Instructions for operating/understanding content do not rely solely on characteristics like shape size location etc.	7.5 (d)
8.	Time limit for time dependent web functions can be adjusted by the user (also refer exceptions).	7.5 (c)
9.	Labels have been provided when content requires input from the users.	7.5 (b)
10.	In content implemented using markup languages the elements have been used according to specification.	7.5 (a)
11.	Purpose of each link is clear to the user and Clear indications are given when a link leads out to a non government website.	3.2.5 7.5 (h)
12.	Web pages are usable even when scripts, applets etc are turned off.	7.3.2
13.	There is a mechanism to control (stop, pause...) audio that starts automatically. There is a mechanism to control scrolling, blinking content. Web pages do not contain any content that flashes for more than three times in a second.	6.7.3 (a) 6.7.3 (b) 6.7.3 (c)
14.	Functionality of content is operable through keyboard and Focus is not trapped in any component while navigating through keyboard only.	7.5 (f) 7.5 (g)

Development (37 guidelines including 18 for accessibility) (contd.)		
S. No.	Guideline	Ref. No.
15.	All information conveyed with color is also available without color.	6.5.4
16.	There is adequate contrast between text and background colour.	6.5.1
17.	Text is readable both in electronic and print format and the page prints correctly on an A4 size paper.	6.4.6
18.	Whenever there is a change in the language of a web page it has been clearly indicated.	5.3.8
19.	All Documents/Reports have a time stamp at least on the main page.	5.2.5
20.	The website has been tested on multiple browsers. Hindi/regional language fonts have been tested on popular browsers for any inconsistency (loss of layout). Documents / pages in multiple languages are updated simultaneously.	5.7.2 6.4.3 7.6 (b)
21.	Minimum content as prescribed in the guidelines is present on the homepage and all subsequent pages	4.5.1 4.5.2
22.	Website content is citizen-oriented, clear & simple in language, consistent in nomenclature, free from offensive/discriminatory language	4.7.2 5.1.1 5.3.1 5.4.2
23.	Website has either a "search" box or a link to a "search" page from every page of the website, along with a link to an updated Site Map	6.9.1 6.10.1
24.	All information, which is of direct importance to the citizen, is accessible from the Homepage.	5.6.1
25.	Mechanism is in place to ensure that all Tender/ Recruitment Notices issued by the Department are published on the website.	4.2.9 4.2.10
26.	All information about the department, useful for the citizen and other stakeholders, is present in the 'About Us' section and mechanism is in place to keep the information up to date.	4.2.1
27.	Website ranks in the first five results on major search engines when searched with relevant keywords.	9.1
28.	All electronic commerce transactions are handled through secure means.	3.4.4

Development (37 guidelines including 18 for accessibility) (contd.)		
S. No.	**Guideline**	**Ref. No.**
29.	If the site uses frames, each frame is properly titled.	6.11
30.	There are no links to 'under construction' pages.	6.8.4
31.	Source of all documents, whether reproduced in part or full, is mentioned.	3.1.5
32.	Website has a 'Contact Us' page, linked from the Home Page and all relevant places in the website.	4.2.12 (a)
	The complete contact details of important functionaries in the Department are given in the 'Contact Us' section.	4.2.12 (c)
33.	The website has a readily available Help section.	4.4.6
34.	Website provides a prominent link to the 'National Portal' from the Home Page and Pages belonging to National Portal load in new browser window.	2.3.1 2.3.2
35.	Association to Government is demonstrated by the use of Emblem/Logo in proper ratio and color, prominently displayed on the homepage of the website	2.1.1 6.3.1
36.	Visual/textual identity elements highlighting the Government's ownership of the website are prominently placed on the page.	6.1.1
37.	The language is free from spelling and grammatical errors	5.3.6

Hosting

Hosting (5 guidelines)		
S. No.	Guideline	Ref. No.
1.	Web Hosting Service Provider provides Helpdesk & technical support on 24x7x365 basis.	8.2.1 (i)
2.	Website is registered under 'gov.in' or 'nic.in' domain.	2.2.1
3.	1. The Hosting Service Provider has: state-of-the art multi-tier security infrastructure as well as devices such as firewall and intrusion prevention systems. a Disaster Recovery (DR) Centre in a geographically distant location and a well crafted DR plan for the website. 2. All possible security measures have been taken to prevent defacement/hacking of the website 3. To handle any eventuality, a contingency plan is in place	8.2.1 (a) 8.2.1 (b) 8.2.1 (e) 8.3
4.	Website has cleared Security Audit by certified agency and has a Security Policy. Applications configured to send mail are enabled over smtp - auth. Mechanism is in place to ensure that all downloadable material is free from virus.	4.4.7 (c) 7.7.1 7.7.2 7.7.3
5.	The Hosting Service Provider has redundant server infrastructure, and performs regular backup of the website to ensure high availability in an efficient and secure manner on a 24x7 basis	8.2.1 8.2.1 (c) 8.2.1 (d)

Appendix - ii

Achieving GIGW Compliance using a Content Management System (CMS)

Content Management System

A **Content Management System (CMS)** is a system that enables managing of content & displaying it on a user interface.

To achieve the simple objectives of content management & display in an effective manner, a CMS should meet the broad requirements listed below:

1. Content creation
2. Content management
3. Content publishing
4. Content presentation

Content creation

Content creation is the functionality needed by the authors (content contributors) who use the CMS. With an effective authoring process, users would be able to successfully adopt the CMS.

A CMS should provide for the following functionality & features to enable authors to effectively contribute content:

- **Single-sourcing (content re-use)**

  A CMS must allow content to be contributed once, and re-used in different contexts. For example, a circular/notification/picture/press release/new scheme/forms etc may be updated on the website, and be available under various sections e.g., Download, What's New, Press Release etc. without the need to upload it…….

- **Metadata creation**

  Metadata is data about data. A CMS should provide functionality to capture metadata such as creator, subject, keywords etc. For example keywords etc about a picture, or scanned image would make the information contained therein searchable.

- **Ease of use & efficiency**

  A CMS must allow authors to create pages without using HTML or other technical knowledge. A CMS would be considered most effective, if it is easy to create and maintain content.

Content management

For a CMS to be effective in managing content, following functionality & features should be included:

Content Management System (contd.)

- **Version control & archiving**

  A CMS should have features such as login based access to ensure tracking of details such as who has created, modified, or approved content. Such features ensure accountability on the part of content creators / approvers.

  A CMS should also include ageing features to automatically flag & change the state of content to "Archived" upon reaching a pre-defined age. This helps not only maintain archives of old and relevant content, but also ensures display of only that content which is current.

- **Workflow**

  A CMS should enable content management in a decentralized manner. Ideally, content input should be at source. For example, the Personnel department would be the source where information about all changes in the allocation of responsibility, designation, physical location etc would be formalized. So, the Personnel department should be responsible for updating the appropriate content in the CMS.

  A CMS should also provide for a proper workflow so that multiple levels of personnel are responsible for contributing content, reviewing and approving it. This feature would help ensure accuracy of content. The CMS workflow should also be easily customizable, so that it remains flexible to adapt any changes in the organisational structure.

- **Reporting**

  A CMS must provide an extensive range of reports, for both users and administrators. Ideally, the system should pro-actively send alerts reminding about content that needs to be reviewed, updated, archived, or permanently purged. This also enables department users to maintain the currency of content.

  Further, a CMS should also report any issues that arise, such as usage stats - most popular pages, daily usage, search engine usage, downloads etc. This would help review & address enhancements to areas that are most frequently used or are attracting little footfall.

  Support for customized reporting is also desirable.

Content Publishing

A CMS should provide for the following publishing functionality and features:

- **Stylesheets & Support for multiple formats**

  Final appearance of content is controlled through the use of stylesheets. Stylesheets help separate the content from its presentation, thus providing flexibility to display

Content Management System (contd.)

the same content in different formats.

The CMS must publish to multiple formats, such as: HTML (web), printed, PDF, hand-held (WAP), and more options that may emerge as technology evolves.

In order to achieve high-quality in every format, it is critical that the content be separated from presentation at the time of authoring. This allows distinct stylesheets to be used for each output.

- **Page templates**

Overall page layout is specified via page templates. Ideally, a non-technical interface should be provided for managing the layout. These templates help to maintain consistency since the page layout e.g., position of navigation bar, menus, pictures, carious sections etc need not be modified every time when the content in any one or more sections is updated.

Content Presentation

A CMS must ensure that the published pages meet certain standards so that they remain of value to users.

The key standards to be met may include:

- **Usability**

This covers aspects such as ease of use, learnability and efficiency. Usability can be assured by conducting tests on the prototype designs with real users.

- **Accessibility**

The CMS must publish content that conforms to standards such as the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Conformity would ensure that the content remains accessible by all despite differences in ability, say, by senior citizens, audio or visually challenged; overcoming boundaries of devices, say, using a PC, laptop, handheld device etc; remaining functional across multiple browsers, say, with or without support for stylesheets, scripting etc.

- **Valid markup**

All pages must conform to the current HTML specification. This ensures maximum compatibility across browsers and platforms.

Appendix - iii

Sustainable User-centric Governance
through Accessible & Managed Websites
सुशासित गणतंत्र का सशक्त माध्यमः वेब साइट

Pluck the low-hanging fruit

With the help of this handbook, the GIGW Team is pleased to share a list of the easiest issues to fix on websites, which once fixed can pave the way for early GIGW compliance. By facilitating awareness & thereafter implemention of these easy fixes, we hope to keep growing the community of compliant websites through a step-by-step approach:

- Identifying most frequently occurring issues that affect GIGW compliance
- Finding and sharing resolutions for the most commonly found issues

Frequently Occurring issues			
S. No.	**Issue**	**Fix**	**Impact**
1.	Improper page titles, & also, without lineage	Add page titles in the format "Home: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India"	Screen readers that assist visually-challenged visitors enabled to inform correct whereabouts
2.	Incorrect or missing page structure	Use the H1, H2 etc hierarchy correctly to categorize text under appropriate headings e.g., Chapter 1 could use h1, Sections could use h2, Sub-sections h3, and so on.	Screen readers able to distinguish headings from body text to improve navigability for visually-challenged visitors
3.	Missing Alt-text or Alt attribute for images	Add Alt-text for all images Add meaningful Alt-text for non-decorative images; For aesthetic images, use blank Alt attribute e.g,. Alt = ""	Images become accessible for Visually-challenged readers & text-only browsers; also, act as advance informers during slow loading instances

Frequently Occurring issues (contd.)			
S. No.	Issue	Fix	Impact
4.	Missing Title attribute for non-descriptive links, e.g., "Read More"	• Add Title attribute with distinctive text value to identify context • Title attribute is NOT mandatory for all links, so, use it only when required.	Visually challenged visitors able to easily & correctly distinguish between different "Read More" links
5.	Missing form control labels	Add label tag to link a form control e.g., text box, radio button, check box with appropriate label	Visually-challenged visitors able to interact with form controls (text box, check box etc) by getting to know the associated label
6.	Improper Table markup	Use <th> to markup Table Headers and <td> for data cells	Screen readers able to distinguish between table headers and table content
7.	Missing 'Skip' links	Use 'Skip to main content' link on each page	Visually challenged visitors able to skip hearing menu items that are common across all pages, and access the main content on each page

Our belief is these fixes can be done easily for even the largest websites at the most comfortable pace.

Heralding Change

Circa decade of 2000s: India was overcoming the usual challenges all developing nations faced at the time & emerging quite a winner - world leader in GDP growth, offering opportunity to global firms to outsource services, attractive destination for foreign institutional investors, greater liquidity providing funds for expansion to micro, small and medium enterprises!

The Internet, aka the World Wide Web (www) acted as a catalyst in improving the speed of communication between individuals and departments, erasing geographical boundaries, raising the quality of life for citizens.

Some key changes over the decades that have transformed the way citizens lead lives today:
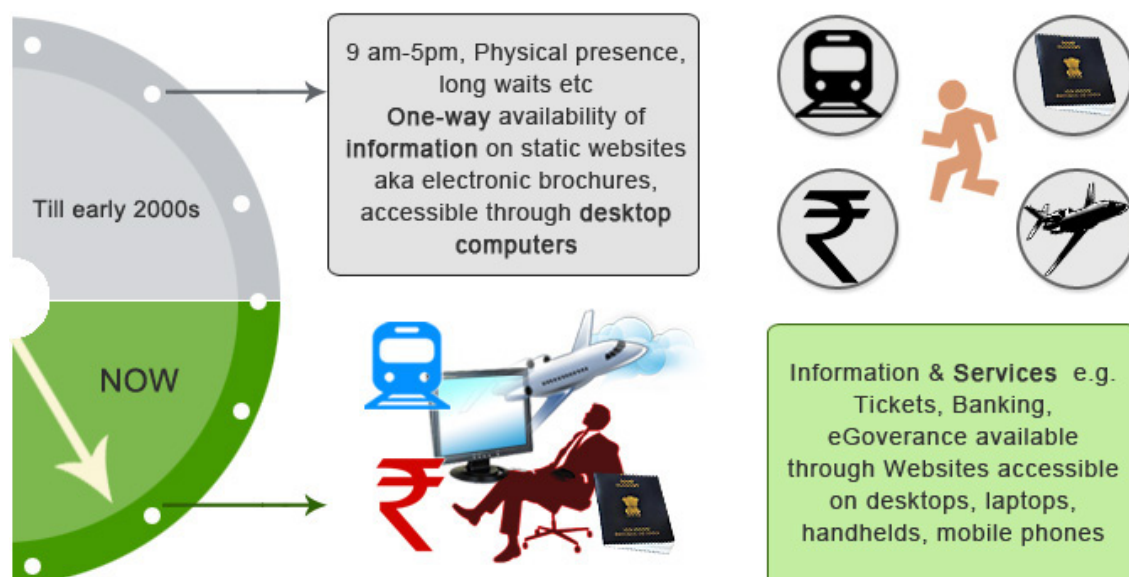
Just like the radical changes in railways bookings, netbanking, eGovernance transformed citizen experience, a HUGE opportunity exists to herald a MASSIVE shift by delivering governance as smoothly and efficiently as looking up schedules of trains & paying bills online.

Imagine the ease a **senior citizen** would feel in being able to be remitted pensions without the painstaking journey to the office, & waiting in a queue; or the invaluable relief for a **differently-abled citizen** to fill an online form seeking admission in to an academic institute; or the immense productivity gain for a **rural netizen** to find out fertilizer availability, or the next vaccination camp for livestock without having to invest half a day in visiting the block or district veterinary centre!

Visualize the significant **efficiency improvements** that can be made within and across

government departments by fast-tracking workflows, such as a **file traversing 23 desks**, without the risk of being lost, and still honouring office procedure mandates to turnaround with approvals or objections within pre-defined times.

All that is needed in order to materialize this transition to smooth-flowing governance, is clear understanding of the ingredients, & metamorphosing the erstwhile static electronic brochures into fully-functional, interactive websites that serve as **virtual offices**:

User-Centric	User-friendly	Universally Accessible
Relevant & easily searchable information	Intuitive, navigable interface	Accessible content despite constraints of different abilities e.g., age-related, visual, devices etc

The process to blend the above ingredients, which are hallmarks of a transformed virtual office is straightforward:

- A Govt. Department appoints an owner for its virtual office, called a **Web Information Manager (WIM)**.
- WIM finalizes all **policies** that would apply to conduct of operations in the virtual office, once operational.
- WIM aided by a technical team, oversees design of an **effective information** architecture to ensure all information and services are served through the department's virtual office. Subsequently, WIM drives the construction efforts to build the virtual office in compliance with the architecture.

Upon conclusion of the construction efforts, WIM seeks a **"completion certificate"** from STQC to ensure the virtual office is compliant with statutory guidelines.

Revolutionizing Democracy With Governance 2.0

India's Constitution ensures inter-alia, fundamental rights to **equality** and **non-discrimination**. To honor the Constitution, its guardians need to be on the constant lookout for instituting ways and means to ensure that these rights are upheld on a continuing basis. As emerging technologies like **internet, social media, mobile** telephony pervade our lives, shaping the way citizens communicate, exercise choices, & execute daily functions, they also empower us to access various opportunities in different and easier ways. Government of India has to keep pace to ensure citizens can access Government services likewise with equal ease, and at the same time, leverage the opportunity to **enhance citizen participation** in governance.

All technology-enabled opportunities once adopted comfortably, allow us to invest significantly lesser human effort and resources, thereby freeing us to focus on further improving the quality of life. In the past, citizens may have had to undertake long journeys spanning miles and face now-avoidable hurdles to access opportunities. They would have wrestled with weeks or even months of fact-finding & still find themselves in a dilemma trying to identify the relevant data that could help to make informed choices. However, now, using suitable **Electronics** and **Information Communication Technology (ICT)** solutions, such as ATMs, assistive design/technology tools, cell phones, websites, and social media, all citizens can achieve most of the erstwhile daunting tasks without proportionate herculean efforts!

To ensure all citizens can equally enjoy the liberating fruits of emerging technology without any discrimination on the basis of abilities: academic, economic, physical, technical etc,

and independent of access to certain kinds of devices, bandwidth etc, Government of India has been evolving guidelines, policies, standards, frameworks and their implementation plans. The most recent such initiative has been the announcement in **October 2013** of the **National Policy on Universal Electronics**.

National Policy on Universal Electronics: To facilitate equal and unhindered access to Electronics and ICTs products and services by differently-abled persons (both physically and mentally challenged) and to facilitate local language support for the same. This shall be achieved through universal access to Electronics & ICT products and services to synchronize with barrier free environment and preferably usable without adaptation. Click to access the PDF available at http://deity.gov.in/ (PDF, 30KB)

The above said policy follows similar initiatives listed below which are aimed at not only facilitating ease of access to information and public services on government websites in a non-discriminatory manner using various devices, including mobile phones, but also enhancing the citizen-government interface by encouraging a two-way healthy, interactive, and participative environment.

Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW): Technology-neutral standards conformity with which helps government departments to ensure their websites remain user-centric, user-friendly, universally accessible throughout the website lifespan. The range of resources, tools, and services offered to facilitate GIGW compliance are available at http://guidelines.gov.in. The GIGW guidelines are downloadable by registered users on the above website, and by others at http://darpg.gov.in/ Click to access the PDF (PDF, 1.6MB)

Framework for Mobile Governance: The m-Governance framework aims to utilize the massive reach of mobile phones and harness the potential of mobile applications to enable easy and 24x7x365 access to public services, especially in the rural areas. Click to access the PDF available at http://www.deity.gov.in/ (PDF, 480KB)

Framework & Guidelines for Use of Social Media for Government Organizations: Using the inherent characteristics of Social media, viz., "voice to all", instant outreach, and 24x7 engagement, Government can engage with stakeholders in real time to make policy making citizen-centric. Click to access the PDF available at http://deity.gov.in/ (PDF, 543KB)

Raising India's eGovernance Rank

The **United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN)** mission is to encourage the sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices globally in sound public policies, effective public administration and efficient civil services, through capacity-building and cooperation among the United Nations Member States..

UNPAN has been conducting an **eGovernment Survey** at an interval of 2 years to assess how information and communication technologies are being used to enhance public services being delivered online to all citizens among its member nations. The 2012 survey findings report out of 193 countries, India's rank moved to **125** (from **119** in 2010).

UNPAN eGovernment Index focuses on service delivery & citizen engagement, and ranks countries based on the listed component indices:

- Web Measure Index
- Telecommunication Infrastructure Index
- Human Capital Index
- e-Participation Index

UNPAN assesses the online web services offered on the parameters listed below, to build the Web Measure index:

- **Information dissemination/outreach**: Existence of a national portal, Head of State website, an eGovernment section, and ministerial websites that should enhance dialogue between Government and citizens, provide news &/or updates on policies, information about Govt. officials responsible for provision of specific online services/queries, information about usage of the website, access to back-office applications, archived information etc

- **Access/Usability**: Availability of Search, Contact Us, Audio/Video, online payment by credit/debit/other methods, e-mail signup for receiving updates, multiple languages, technology to send messages to mobile phones/handheld devices, Security, and features to enable access for people with different abilities

- **Service Delivery Capability**: Downloadable/printable forms; Online forms, Job opportunities, e-mail alerts & RSS feed for e-participation, SLA for Govt. to respond to submitted forms/e-mails

- **Citizen Participation/interconnectedness**: e-participation policy, tools to invite public opinion, calendar & archived information about participation activities, provision for publishing results of citizen feedback including queries & inputs from citizens

UNPAN evaluates the specific sectors listed below in each country on the above parameters:

1. Health
2. Education
3. Social Welfare
4. Labour
5. Finance

Each of the above parameters can be addressed comprehensively by ensuring compliance

with **Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW)**.

To boost GIGW compliance and thus India's eGovernance rank, in the process benefiting a billion plus citizens, an initiative called **SUGAM Web** has been launched. The intent is to achieve **S**ustainable **U**ser-Centric **G**overnance through **A**ccessible and **M**anaged websites. **SUGAM Web** leverages mechanisms listed below to enhance user-centricity, usability, and universal accessibility of Indian Govt. web space.

#	SUGAM Web Mechanisms
1.	SUGAM Web aspires to foster a community of nationwide stakeholders who are involved in delivering eGovernance by providing a platform for sharing experiences, identifying the challenges & success factors specific to ensuring GIGW compliance
2.	Sensitization workshops to raise awareness about how conformity to guidelines can help deliver sustainable user-centric eGovernance
3.	Membership & participation in global consortia like W3C, and emulation of global standards like WCAG to adopt & align with the best in global standards
4.	Robust Helpdesk comprising of interactive support through phone, email, in-person, website
5.	Pre-assessment of GIGW compliance to expedite final certification by STQC
6.	Ready reckoner to understand nuances & implementation roadmap of GIGW compliance
7.	Revision of GIGW guidelines to keep evolving with emerging technologies

Awareness of the factors that influence the UNPAN eGovernance Index, structure & support offered through SUGAM Web, bolstered by the collective will of all stakeholders should act as the essential catalysts to ensure India's eGovernance rank keeps advancing to take its rightful place among the leading nations of the world.

Touching New Horizons

Congratulations! The World Wide Web (www) aka the Internet turns 25 in 2014!

Why is this birth anniversary so special, and how do we make the most of it? Advances in information technology like the Internet may have needed just a quarter century to change quality of human life unimaginably for the better. Think of something, seek it online, order over the internet - without moving more than the fingers over a screen, or the tongue to issue voice commands! Other advancements in related fields like **touchscreen technology** took a while longer, about half a century to mature before enabling mainstream impact, but, the resulting change has been remarkably radical - not only has touch technology significantly reduced effort in navigating screens, activating functionality, and zooming etc features, but the empowering experience it delivers has helped overcome boundaries of physical ability, language & literacy.

Each one of these innovations has changed our lives in such a powerful manner that what was considered fiction few decades ago is NOW easily usable, and taken-for-granted effortless technology on a **24x7x365** basis, even in a 5 year young child's hands!

Bringing potable water from distant water sources into homes by laying pipes underground and making it flow on opening of taps improved quality of life by letting humans focus on better things to do with the time and efforts saved. Likewise, the pipes of "internet bandwidth" have the huge potential to bring to citizens all public information & services sought, available on a finger "tap" gesture or speech!

To keep India moving ahead and to empower Govt. Departments, Development agencies, & other stakeholders to keep continually converting the deemed impossible or difficult-to-deliver public services into practical realities in our lives, Govt. and related entities can join the **World Wide Web consortium (W3C)** which coincidentally turns 20 this year.

W3C World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is an international body with membership from various segments of society, e.g., government, industry, academia, civil society, individuals, and NGOs, that develops **open web standards**. These standards have the potential to enable the design of rich interactive user experiences, powered by data stores of text, images, audio, video etc, and availability on **any device**. Being a member of W3C gives the opportunity to preview the standards while they are being formulated as well as the ability to influence their development.

W3C members can choose to participate in the W3C groups below.

> 1.**Working Groups**. Working Groups typically produce deliverables (e.g., Recommendation Track technical reports, software, test suites, and reviews of the

deliverables of other groups).

2. **Interest Groups**. The primary goal of an Interest Group is to bring together people who wish to evaluate potential Web technologies and policies. An Interest Group is a forum for the exchange of ideas.

3. **Coordination Groups**. A Coordination Group manages dependencies and facilitates communication with other groups, within or outside of W3C.
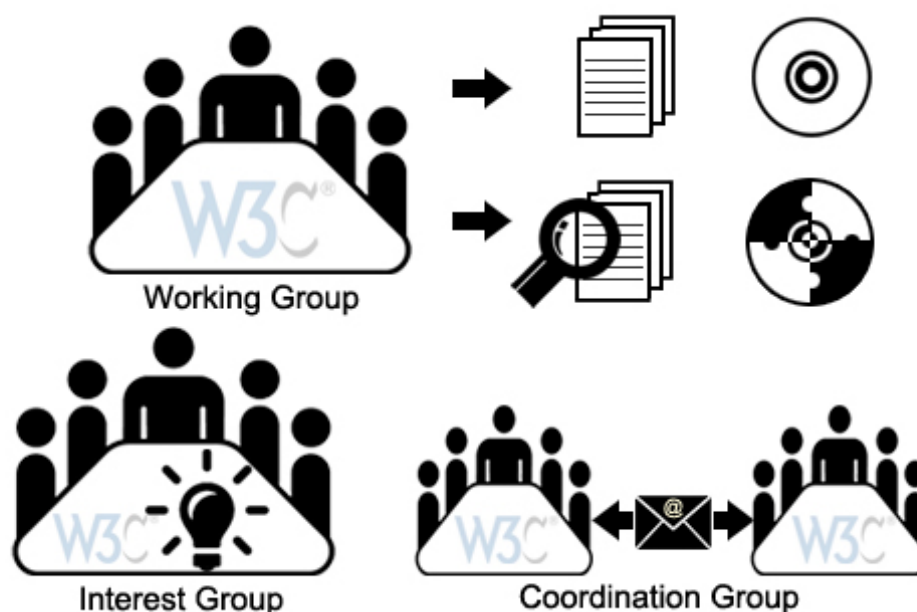
Details of each of the membership types are available online at **http://www.w3.org/2005/10/Process-20051014/groups#charter-extension**

SUGAM Web remains committed to the cause of helping all stakeholders experience, appreciate, and expand the ease with which citizens of all abilities, age groups, locations can be connected to the desired resources to improve lives exercising choices without going through the erstwhile physically tiresome journey, efforts or inordinately long waits.

Sccess is incomplete without U!

SUCCESS

SUGAM Web completes six months in March. Just like the occasion when a human baby begins to socialize by flashing the first smile is memorable, we are excited to report that the young SUGAM Web community is beginning to socialize - as evidenced in members sharing experiences gained when trying to ensure **User-friendly, User-centric, Universally Accessible (UUU)** websites for their respective departments.

Based on the experiences shared by several departments, we conducted an investigation into the nature of current issues preventing Govt. web sites from getting certified for GIGW compliance. Interestingly, the following key findings are easy to fix, just like the **7 issues** reported 6 months ago in the **1st SUGAM Web edition**:

#	Issue	Fix	Impact
1.	Most web sites do not have printer-friendly versions	**Ctrl+P** keyboard shortcut, or **Print, Printer-friendly** etc link to allow visitors to print web page content sans interactive, navigation etc elements e.g., menu & side bars	Differently-abled, keyboard-only, and all other users empowered to issue printouts of relevant content
2.	About 2 of 3 web sites use external web site links BUT, do not indicate this on the links	Use of *title* attribute on external links to clarify e.g., "*External site; opens in a new window*"	Assistive technology enabled to help differently-abled users identify & access external sites
3.	3 of 5 web sites are missing Copyright, Hyperlinking, Privacy policies	Templates of **all** policies readily available for adopting/adapting in *GIGW Compliance & Certification Handbook* [available on web.guidelines.gov.in]	Enabler to expedite GIGW compliance certification

#	Issue	Fix	Impact
4.	More than 2 of 3 web sites do not provide form to fill Feedback	• At minimum, use **basic form structure** with fields such as to collect visitor identity, feedback subject, and comments limited by word count • To facilitate more structured collection & analysis, use defined feedback **subject categories** & **sub-categories**	• Reassurance of interactivity & responsiveness to all users • Structured feedback collection & analysis possible
5.	More than 3 of 5 web sites do not indicate last updated/reviewed date	Easy inclusion of **update/review date** in **Content Management System**, formulation & implementation of **Content Review Policy**	Reassurance of content quality to all users
6.	Half the web sites do not either provide link to National portal, or clicking the link does not open the National portal in a new window	Banners available along with hyperlink address http://india.gov.in to ensure GoI web sites link to National portal at india.gov.in/link-us	Conveys strong sense of link to Indian national Government
7.	Nearly half the web sites do not use proper Govt. identity	Identity symbols like national/state emblem, organizational logo etc to be prominently displayed on Home page & all important entry pages	Reassurance of authenticity & authority

#	Issue	Fix	Impact
8.	Nearly half the web sites do not provide user-friendly features like Search, Sitemap, Help/FAQ	• GOI search available to all GoI Departments so can be embedded into easily from http://goisearch.gov.in/ • Each Department's Web site structure is easily depictable in text & graphic form • Help/FAQ to contain at the minimum information that is useful for visitors to navigate & use the web site, along with frequently sought details by visitors	Empowered users able to easily locate information through Search, Sitemap, FAQs

By implementing the easy fixes suggested above, each Government Department can ensure that the respective department web site becomes truly valuable to all stakeholders - helping them to fulfill the purpose of their visit & thus achieve success with *Your* help.

Remember: India's Sccess is incomplete without *U!*

Building Bridges Across

"You are never given a wish without also being given the power to make it come true."

- Richard Bach (RB)

In 2013, the website of Department of Health & Family Welfare, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare website was rated "Good but not compliant". Several points were found to be non-compliant as per **STQC** report **(Standardisation Testing and Quality Certification)** which was officially shared during a workshop at **DeitY (Department of Electronics & Information Technology)**. Efforts were since undertaken to redesign the website & submit to obtain **STQC** certification for GIGW compliance.

Early this year, the Department of Health & Family Welfare launched its redesigned website (http://mohfw.gov.in) which is user friendly, restructured, content enriched and user centric. It has a number of special features for visually challenged users and accessible to all citizens/persons with other disability. It has been designed to comply with all other mandates of GIGW. This is a giant leap towards effective e-Governance in the Ministry and also enables Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to become an effective member of **SUGAM Web**. In short, this website conforms to *UUU trilogy* i.e. *Usable, User-Centric* and *Universally Accessible*.

The redesigned website has user friendly features and a search engine for advanced and customized search operations. Contents have been grouped systematically under drop-down Menu bars, allowing for easy navigation. All relevant policies have been placed on the website for public view & the necessary business logic incorporated into a **CMS (Content Management System)** which is deployed for updating the website content.

The site is also offering improved features & services, such as:

- Enhanced content presentation
- Options to increase or decrease the font size
- Ability to view the website in standard and high contrast (helpful to colour blind citizens)
- Screen Reader friendliness
- Comprehensive and up to date content, with the active collaboration & timely inputs of the personnel in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Updating content on a continuous basis is being done to make this website a one stop shop for all sorts of information related to the Health sector.

The GIGW Team is happy to congratulate the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare on this exemplary effort. We wish other departments & ministries also find similar success in their journey towards GIGW compliance, and list below steps to create many more **success stories** similar to the one shared in this edition!

"We're the bridge across forever, arching above the sea, …choosing …triumphs challenges impossible odds, testing ourselves over and again, …!" - RB

Creating More Success Stories:

The GIGW Team is eager to hear from all stakeholders, & help organizations achieve GIGW compliance:

STQC has evaluated websites of all the central ministries and departments

1. Have you received from STQC an assessment of GIGW compliance for your organization website?

2. In the aforesaid report, what are the perceived hurdles stopping from achieving GIGW compliance?

3. Any Other Comments, Suggestions: _____

_____

Send your responses to **webguidelines@nic.in** before **May 15, 2014**

Walking the last mile

After 31 weeks of sustained efforts that have begun bearing fruit, as evidenced by the success stories that are trickling in, we renew our commitment to keep nurturing the **SUGAM Web** platform: where community members can engage & gain useful tips to cover each step of the journey of building and maintaining GIGW compliant websites.

Let us walk through what happens after the pre-requisite initial steps listed below have been undertaken by a department:

1. A Govt. Department appoints an owner for its website (serving as its **virtual office**), called a **Web Information Manager** (**WIM**)

2. WIM finalizes all policies that would apply to conduct of operations in the virtual office, once operational

3. WIM aided by a technical team, oversees design of effective **information architecture** to ensure all information and services are served through the department's virtual office. Subsequently, WIM drives the construction efforts to build the virtual office in compliance with the architecture

Just like upon successful conclusion of the construction efforts of a bricks-and-mortar building a certifying authority grants a completion certificate, WIM seeks a "**compliance certificate**" from *Standards Testing & Quality Certification* (**STQC**) to ensure the virtual office is compliant with statutory guidelines. This certification process involves:

1. Submitting a *Web Quality Manual* (**WQM**) [for policy templates, refer *GIGW Compliance & Certification Handbook* available on the guidelines.gov.in website] along with an **Application form** and necessary fees.

2. Passing 2 rounds of testing by STQC; success criteria of each round explained below:

    a. **Round 1:** Department resolving first list of issues of varying severity: minor, medium, major; & submitting to STQC for re-evaluation

    b. **Round 2:** Department filing closure report of any pending issue found by STQC in Round 2, to STQC's satisfaction

3. Department undergoing a physical site audit by Team STQC, which involves:

    a. Inspection of documented form of policies (as specified in the WQM)*

    b. Verification of procedures laid down to implement each policy

    c. Audit of previous or current transaction records that demonstrate how each procedure is performed

*** NOTE:** As part of ongoing efforts to expedite GIGW compliance, *1000* web sites are being proactively evaluated by STQC for *Round 1*, without the website owners submitting a WQM. Therefore *Step 3a.* is an exception. Under routine circumstances, documented form of policy will be inspected at *Step 1* itself.

After STQC has completed the physical site audit successfully, a certificate would be granted, that may be proudly & prominently displayed on the department website.

Creating More Success Stories:

The GIGW Team is eager to hear from all stakeholders, & help organizations achieve GIGW compliance:

STQC has evaluated websites of all the central ministries and departments

    1. Have you received from STQC an assessment of GIGW compliance for your organization website?

    2. In the aforesaid report, what are the perceived hurdles stopping from achieving GIGW compliance?

    3. Any Other Comments, Suggestions: _____

    _____

Send your responses to **webguidelines@nic.in** before *Jun 15, 2014*

Social Networks to Power eGovernance

Historically, our human species has been finding newer ways to connect with each other and work together in the pursuit of happiness. From the cave-dwelling era, we have been successful in communicating using media such as *visuals, voice, words.*

Less than 3 decades ago, with the birth of the Internet, we found a way to send messages much farther and faster than was possible with any prior means. Then, came the birth of Social media: our capability experienced tremendous growth in communicating even faster and in affecting various dimensions of human life: **social, political, economic**. What unleashed such unprecedented power in the hand of citizens is the set of inherent characteristics of Social media, viz.

- "voice to all"

- instant outreach

- 24x7 engagement

Government can use the power of social media to engage with stakeholders in real time and make governance and policy-making a citizen-centric exercise.

The broad roadmap that Government may follow to leverage Social media effectively includes:

1. **Define objectives** - Most important 1st step, to identify the purpose of using Social media e.g., generating awareness on action plans and implementation strategies, seeking feedback, public relations, issue based & general interaction

2. **Be present on Social media** - Build presence by creating a simple Facebook page, Twitter handle etc

3. **Give frequent and useful updates** - Designate "spokespersons" from each Ministry/Department to provide authentic & relevant updates

4. **Invite comments & feedback on social, developmental issues from citizens on Social media** - Go beyond election manifestos to ensure effective implementation of policies, plans, schemes & open the doors to feedback

5. **Process & respond responsibly to citizen inputs** - Share transparently actions taken with regard to citizen inputs

Implementation of Social media offers more than the listed benefits:

• **Lesser cost of setup** vs. conventional outreach through print & traditional electronic media

• **Enhanced sense of participation** in governance among citizens

• **Faster turnaround in taking corrective measures** based on real time & uninhibited feedback from citizens & other stakeholders

Framework & Guidelines for Use of Social Media for Government Organizations have been formulated by **Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY)**, and can be referred at http://deity.gov.in/ to finalize your organization's Social media strategy.

Celebrating Achievements with Web Ratna Awards

Celebrating is part of human existence. Since time immemorial, humans have been prompt to rejoice over *basic events* like eating a meal together, to *regular events* such as sowing seeds and harvesting the crops, to *turn-of-life occasions* like a birth, graduating of a child from being a quadruped to a biped, performing feats such as returning with the first hunt, weddings etc.

The act of celebrating involves acknowledging the happiness of the moment and in turn of the many preceding acts that contribute to make the celebratory event possible. Such acknowledgement helps further fuel humanity's appetite for encores. For example, eating a meal together would be preceded by gathering the ingredients for the meal, the act of cooking, inviting and assembling all, serving the meal, and finally parting until the next meal.

All of civilization's constructive efforts are naturally meant to culminate in celebrations of the worthy efforts invested in building something that adds significant value to humanity, and keep improving upon the past with each iteration. The **virtuous cycle** of investing effort, enjoying its outcome, and eagerly looking forward to doing it all over again is a sign of life and its cyclic vitality!

In the same spirit, **Web Ratna Awards (WRA)**, a biennial event (*once-in-two years*), celebrate the achievements of Government departments in web based e-Governance initiatives. This year, WRA seek to honour exemplary achievements under listed categories:

- Outstanding Citizen Centric Service

- Public Participation Initiative

- Outstanding Content

- Innovative Use of Technology

- Comprehensive Web Presence - Ministry/Department (Central Government)

- Comprehensive Web Presence - State/UT Government

- Open Data Champion - Ministry/Department/Organization/State

WRA realizes that a lot goes into making any e-Governance initiative successful - beginning with the seeding of an idea to **serve citizens better** or to **enhance the departmental efficiency**, going on to building consensus and sustaining a shared vision so that stakeholders' energy can be dedicated to ensuring effective fruition of the idea in the form of a **useful website/application/service/dataset**!

The nominations for **Web Ratna Awards 2014** may be submitted online at http://webratna.india.gov.in Nomination form templates and all relevant links are available on the home page of the website. The last date for submission is **31st August, 2014**.

Look forward to participation from all stakeholders in the Indian Government.

Affirmative steps towards effective eGovernance

Just like a human child exhibits initiative by beginning to crawl on its own, but often needs a helping hand to stand on its feet and take its first walking steps, Government departments after having expressed their natural desire to build web presence - website and/or web applications - need to be empowered in order to keep moving towards effective eGovernance.

What may be the factors that a Government department should consider in its "internet-infancy"?

- **Web Vision:** Articulate clear direction; decide what must the department's web presence do

- **Capable Team:** Lead by a **Web Information Manager** (*Joint Secy* or above) to translate the vision into functional systems

- **Robust Processes:** To achieve steady state of the department's web presence and consequently, satisfied stakeholders

The department's *Web Vision* is an extension of the department mandate which is already defined for each department in the form of its Citizen Charter. Many if not all aspects of the purpose of a department's existence can be suitably served by its web presence. For example, the department web site may offer information in a *User-friendly, Usable, Universally accessible (UUU)* way about the department's purpose, its services, the various schemes it implements for the citizens' benefit, forms that need to be filled to obtain information/services from the department, other interactive opportunities such as feedback about the department services etc.

The *Web Information Manager* can lead a capable team to build the department's web presence and maintain it so that it continues to serve its purpose to the satisfaction of all

stakeholders. Building web presence is similar to construction of a physical building. Just like the architecture of a building is decided in advance to serve the needs of its occupants and visitors long before construction activities commence, the department must finalize the **information architecture** for its web site in advance to ensure all citizens who visit the web site can access information and services conveniently, and the department officials should also feel empowered to maintain the web site with ease.

As time flows, human effort is continually focused on evolving technology in a way that helps us do tasks faster, with better quality, and often in lesser overall costs. For example, historically wedges were used in several forms e.g., axes, chisels, knives, scissors to separate wood pieces or other thick and hard material that would have otherwise required almost herculean effort to fragment. Over time, improvisations such as sharper metal edges & laser technology have helped in further reduction of resource input to produce remarkably & increasingly accurate results. The continued investment of human effort into developing & smart usage of such tools results in delivery of results with reduced inputs and greater precision. Departments need to likewise invest energy in setting up such process of continuous improvement in the management of web sites, so that content offered is always accurate, current, and accessible to all without discrimination on the basis of ability, age, bandwidth, device etc.

Due attention to the above factors would help achieve efficiency for the department too, freeing up valuable resources to focus on other priority tasks for nation building - thus realizing the goal of *Maximum Governance, Minimum Government* through effective eGovernance!

Citizen & Govt Partnership for effective

eGovernance

Since time immemorial, societies have thrived using simple structures where responsibilities are divided to ensure fulfilment of a shared purpose - happy existence. Citizens interact with each other and based on the outcome of the interaction, agree to support each other in execution of respective responsibilities. Some citizens may be entrusted with the role of formulating policies useful for governing various aspects of life, and other citizens may perform the role of ensuring implementation of such policies for everyone's welfare.

As technology evolves, citizens must keep harnessing it to nurture a civil society that can freely communicate its needs & concerns, and collaboratively devise means to overcome any hurdles in the path of comfortable living. To continue honouring the successful tradition of using role based structures to ensure happy societies, Government of India has launched a platform called **MyGov** (**http://mygov.nic.in**) - that enables citizen engagement with government for effective governance.

Based on simplicity, the MyGov platform allows both Citizens and Government to engage as explained:

• **Discuss**: Participate in discussions that bring out the best of citizens to identify issues and solutions

• **Do**: Tasks focused on nation building

• **Disseminate**: Government departments can spread information rapidly among the

registered users using the new-age technology

The MyGov platform offers 3 choices to engage as outlined above:

1. **Groups**: Themes that the Government considers priority for inviting citizen inputs

2. **Creative Corner**: To invite inputs on branding aspects of Government initiatives like designing banners/logos, suggesting a name, or creative punch line etc

3. **Open Forum**: All issues of national importance can be discussed here widely amongst all citizens registered on MyGov

Government departments stand to benefit tremendously by using the MyGov platform to:

• Align with citizen needs and sentiments

• Encourage citizens to contribute to nation-building (crowd-sourcing)

• Ensure formulation of policies and their successful implementation

To join hands on this worthy journey, Government departments may visit MyGov and associate with us at **http://mygov.nic.in/associate_with_mygov.html**

Framework to energize eGovernance initiatives

An action-oriented framework can help all eGovernance initiatives of the Government to begin, cross intermediate milestones and reach the desired goals at a satisfactory pace. On its first anniversary, **SUGAM Web** is happy to share a **IASS Framework** encompassing three distinct action areas that need to be invested in to ensure success of any such initiative.

- **INTRODUCE**: Establish the need to act; engage all stakeholders in clarifying the specific expectations and estimate resource requirements to achieve desired goals

- **ASSIMILATE**: Acquire, assemble the right resources to carry out the initiative, & plan ahead to overcome anticipated hurdles

- **SERVE & SUSTAIN**: Deliver as per the plan, transparently report progress, and identify any gaps in execution or areas worthy of exceeding beyond the originally decided targets and address them

The first action area is inquiry into the need for the initiative. This area requires all stakeholders to agree upon beginning an engagement to address the **WHY** of any further action. For example, recently a need was identified - approximately over 7 crore families did NOT have access to formal banking services in India. In the absence of such services, the families were prone to ills of human suffering such as deprivation from secure facilities to keep monetary savings & exploitation by money-lenders, which inspired Government into affirmative action to ensure financial inclusion of those on the margins. This need is clearly introduced through a **Mission Document** on the Department of Financial Services website **http://financialservices.gov.in**

The second action area involves getting together all stakeholders, possibly using multiple

1st Anniversary

channels e.g., meetings of Government departments, outreach to citizens, academia, industry etc to figure out the **HOW** for the tasks ahead. In the example begun above on financial inclusion, the Government mobilized departments such as Department of Financial Services, all public sector and privatized banks, and leveraged the citizen engagement platform, **MyGov** (**http://mygov.nic.in**) to invite ideas, logos, tag-line for financial inclusion. The citizen participation was encouraging, and the name *Jan-Dhan Yojana* was chosen from the thousands of entries received online on MyGov.

The third and most vital link is **sustained** delivery & **transparent** reporting - ensuring execution as per the plan, closely monitoring the rollout to see if the implementation suffers from any unforeseen difficulties, or discover any new areas for improving quality of life for our citizens. Continuing with the financial inclusion example, sustaining the momentum and transparent progress reporting beyond the launch is a critical action area that has been successfully achieved by the Jan-Dhan Yojana as evidenced by the **6 crore plus accounts** opened since launch. The progress is reported regularly through updates on the **Department of Financial Services** website (Exact figure: **62547166** accounts opened under Jan-Dhan Yojana till **18 October 2014**, Source: **http://financialservices. gov.in/banking/ProgressReport.asp**).

Another example of effective use of the web, in conformance with the **IASS Framework** is the **Swachch Bharat** campaign, whose genesis, launch, sustenance and transparent reporting are being done remarkably through the sites **http://sbchallenge.mygov.in** & **http://sbupdate.mygov.in**

SUGAM Web wishes its subscribers a **Happy Deepawali** and hopes that successful adoption of the **IASS Framework** by Government departments will help realize the worthiness of using eGovernance effectively for nation building!

For any feedback contact us at:

Address for Correspondence

Data Centre and Web Services Group
National Informatics Centre
A-Block, CGO Complex,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003

Email : webguidelines@nic.in
Phone : 011 - 24305374
Fax   : 011 - 24368854