



# P & T Accounts and Finance Officers Association

National Headquarters: O/o The Sr. Manager, MMS, New Delhi-28

(Association consisting members of IP&T AFS Group 'B' and Promotee Group 'A' officers, viz AAO, AO, Sr.AO, JTS, STS and JAG Grades)

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**No. CHQ/P&TAFOA/2025/30**

**Dated: 09.11.2025**

**To**

The Sr. Deputy Director General (PAF)  
Department of Posts,  
Dak Bhawan,  
New Delhi – 110001

**Subject: Restoration of 3% promotional Fitment/ Increment Benefit at the time of Promotion through LDCE to AAO Cadre-reg.**

Respected Sir,

I would like to bring to your kind notice that a number of officers who were promoted to the AAO Cadre through the LDCE (Limited Departmental Competitive Examination) were initially granted the benefit of 3% promotional increment under FR 22(I) a(I), **as explicitly mentioned in the respective appointment letters of the promoted officers.** Subsequently, the said 3% increment under FR 22(I)a(I) was withdrawn vide PA Wing letter No. (01)/2015/PA-Admn.I/4325 to 4385 dated 26.04.2021, on the ground that these officers had already availed the benefits under the MACP Scheme prior to their promotion.

2. It is a matter of fact that the above decision has resulted in adverse financial impact on a huge number of IP&TAFS Group 'B' (Gazetted) officers with large scale recoveries affecting pay, allowances and future terminal benefits. The Association had earlier represented the matter vide letters dated 03.06.2021, 17.10.2022 and 10.04.2023, however, the issue remains unsettled.

3. It is pertinent to mention here that the promotion to AAO Cadre through LDCE is not a regular promotion based on the seniority-cum-fitness basis, but a merit-based competitive selection process, conducted through national level examination. Officers promoted through LDCE ascend from different cadres to the IP&TAFS Group 'B' (Gazetted) cadre, assuming higher functional responsibilities along with All-India transfer liability. Hence, selection through LDCE does not fall under the category of "normal promotion".

4. In essence, **regular promotion** and **promotion through Limited Departmental Competitive Examination (LDCE)** are two distinct channels, differing in their purpose and process, as outlined below:

a) **Regular promotion** is part of the normal career progression, where advancement depends on **seniority-cum-fitness, experience, and length of service**, without any competitive assessment and

b) **LDCE promotion**, on the other hand, is a **distinct and competitive route**, where employees can earn promotion **based on merit secured through performance in competitive examination**, and not seniority.

Therefore, it is the considered submission of the Association that **promotions earned through LDCE cannot be treated at par with regular seniority-based promotions**, for the purpose of denying the 3% promotional increment under FR 22(I) a(I), as both are governed by different selection criteria and serve distinct objectives.

5. In this context, provisions of Para 4 of Annexure-I to the DoPT's MACP Guidelines issued vide O.M. No. 35034/3/2008-Estt.(D) dated 19.05.2009 and 22.10.2019, clearly refers only to *regular promotions* and does not make any reference to promotions earned through LDCE. Therefore, the said provision supports of our above view that the restriction on grant of 3% promotional increment is applicable only in cases of regular promotions, and not to merit-based selections/ promotions through LDCE.

6. Furthermore, kind reference is invited to the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 28.11.2023 vide Civil Appeal No. 3641 of 2023 (Pavnesh Kumar Vs Union of India), particularly paragraphs 13, 14 & 16 of the order, wherein the Apex Court has categorically held that Promotions through LDCE are merit-based competitive selections, distinct from regular promotions, and cannot be equated with the normal mode of promotion or its applicable criteria. (Copy enclosed)

7. It is also pertinent to mention that the Association constituted an impartial Internal Committee to examine the matter comprehensively from both the rule and legal perspectives. A copy of the Committee's report (Appendix-A & B), along with all relevant enclosures, is submitted herewith for kind consideration. The Committee has not only **recommended restoration of the 3% promotional / fitment benefit on joining the AAO cadre**, as

implemented by C&AG, Railway, but has also observed that promotion to AAO through LDCE bears the attributes of Direct Recruitment for the purpose of MACPs. **Accordingly, the Committee has recommended that AAO posts filled through LDCE may be treated as Direct Recruitment for MACP purposes**, in line with DoPT guidelines and the practice already being followed by the office of the C&AG. In this context, Railway Board Clarification issued vide PC/N/2009/ACP/2 dated 12.09.2012 based on DOPT clarification dated 16.08.2012 may kindly be referred to. It is further submitted that the **AAO Recruitment Rules 2018 also contain a provision for Direct Recruitment**, which strengthens the above position.

8. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the authority may kindly reconsider the matter of **promotions earned through LDCE**, in light of the DoPT guidelines issued from time to time, interpreted in their true spirit, and supported by various judicial pronouncements including the Hon'ble Supreme Court judgment dated 28.11.2023. Accordingly, it is humbly requested that the following may be considered:

- (i) Withdrawal of PA Wing letter dated 26.04.2021,
- (ii) Restoration of 3% promotional/fitment benefit under FR 22(I) a(I) to all eligible AAOs selected through LDCE, and
- (iii) Declaration of AAO cadre as Direct Recruitment for the purpose of MACPs with effect from date of notification of AAO RR 2018, to remove long-standing pay anomalies and ensure equitable career progression.

Such consideration will uphold fairness, natural & administrative justice, remove prevailing disparities, and reinforce the merit-based progression envisaged under the LDCE system.

9. This Association places full faith that the above matter will receive kind, empathetic and judicious consideration in the larger interest of service equity, morale of the cadre and administrative fairness.

With profound regards.

Enclo: Supreme Court Order dated 28.11.2023,  
Appendix-A &B to the Committee's Report

Yours sincerely,



(M. Sudhakar)  
General Secretary