

STANDING ORDER NO.38

CHAPTER NO. IX

Poona No.1, dated 16th Nov., 1964.

**Subject:- Mobile Squad:
 Programme of work for the –**

At present there seems to be no planned programme for the operation of the Mobile Squad in the Divisions. The squads generally work on their own and occasionally on the information furnished by the Divisional Forest Officers or under their instructions. Long distances are covered each day apparently without proper planning and direction. As a result these squads are not in a position to compact effectively the large scale illicit fellings and clandestine transport. Detection is often confined merely to the newly constructed dwellings. Detection of offences in situ. of cases of unauthorized transport and illicit conversion is negligible as compared to the incidence of such offences and ample scope available for detection. Consequently the impact of these squads on the prevention of forest offences has not been as desired. The check on log accounts, scrutiny of diaries of the Range Forest Officers and of the progress reports of the squads are often perfunctory. This defeats the object of maintenance of the squads and their working has degraded into purposeless movements over roads (perhaps during periods of the day when illicit transport does not normally take place) that admits of little check.

2. The following general orders, are, therefore, issued for strict compliance in order that the Mobile Squads function effectively to fulfil the primary objective of the scheme.

3. The Divisional Forest Officers will plan the programme of the Mobile Squad for each month well in advance. This will be strictly confidential and among others will specifically cover the following points:

(a) Check of forest produce in transit on specified routes in particular Range during day and night hours:

(i) The distances to be covered on each route will be limited. These will be departed from only when the squad is chasing and intercepting trucks laden with contraband forest produce, or when on specific intelligence. The incidence of transit check will be directly proportional to the frequency of transport of forest produce from areas susceptible to illicit cuttings.

(ii) A large number of head-loads of firewood are surreptitiously transported by rail and other means. It is essential that surprise raids are staged at the concerned railheads and at strategic points to arrest effectively such illicit traffic in forest produce. The number of raids and checks carried out and the result thereof should be mentioned precisely in the dairy.

(iii) During transit checks along specified routes the Range Forest Officers must visit every check naka en-route, initial the entries in the Depot Register, record the presence of the Depot Guard, mention the time of the visit in the Depot Register and in his dairy, record the observations of his visit to the Checking Depot and bring any lapse promptly (at least within 12 hours) to the notice of the Divisional Forest Officer concerned.

(b) Check of newly constructed houses, hutments, courtyards, etc.:

(i) The squads should build up information centres and induce people to give information regarding forest offence by way of prompt decision of cases and suitable awards to informers. The Panchayats and Police Patils should be apprised in writing of the itinerary of the Squads and requested to communicate pertinent information promptly to the address of the Divisional Forest Officer and Squad Ranger. The Range Forest Officer should informally contact the Panchayat officials and Police Patils and other informers and make a mention thereof in their diaries.

(ii) They should pay surprise checks to the village during their routine transit checks.

(c) Check on conversion of forest produce:

The present transit and conversion rules in fact, if properly acted upon, leave scope for illicit transport and conversion of forest produce. The programme for the month should envisage thorough checking of the Sawmills in specified areas, hand-sawing pits, kath "bhatties", quarries etc. The Range Forest Officer will initial the registers after scrutiny mention the results of the check in his diary and report the omissions and lapses, if any, to the Divisional Forest Officer within 12 hours of the check.

(d) Check of contract areas and surrounds:

Each month the Squad Range Forest Officer and the forest staff will critically inspect a particular number of coupes and their surrounds with a view to check illicit fellings. The results of such checks should be mentioned in the diaries and special reports made to the Divisional Forest Officer within 12 hours of the check.

(e) Check of forest areas where incidence of illicit fellings is high:

The programme will include inspection of at least 7 such areas during the month. The result of the inspection should be reported by the Squad Range Forest Officer to the concerned Divisional Forest Officer forthwith.

(f) The squad will work on all working days intermittently during day and night according to the hours which will have to be carefully fixed. Should exigency of work demand, the squads should proceed to the scene of offence with the greatest dispatch be it a holiday or an odd hour. The squad may, however, avail of another week day, after seeking Divisional Forest Officer's permission in lieu of the holiday on which it was required to work account of emergency.

(g) The squad will not leave its jurisdiction without prior orders of the Divisional Forest Officer concerned, except in emergent circumstances when required to chase vehicles, known at short notice to be carrying illicit material. But in such cases, the fact must be reported to the Divisional Forest Officer

within 6 hours, after return to camp or headquarters and ex-post-facto approval thereto obtained. Such cases will be exceptional.

(h) The programmes should be elastic to admit of surprise checks. But this discretion should be exercised by the Divisional Forest Officer and the emergent cases by the Range Forest Officers clarifying the need for change in the scheduled programme.

(i) The Log Books of the jeeps must be frequently scrutinized at least once a week and entries attested by the Divisional Forest Officer and/or Independent Sub-Divisional Forest Officer.

Discreet enquiries should be made by the Divisional Forest Officer as regards efficacy of the tours by the Squads. The distance covered should be scrutinized and wherever necessary explanation of the Range Forest Officer called for.

(j) Diaries of Range Forest Officers must be submitted by the Divisional Forest Officer to the Conservator of Forests, weekly on the following day, invariably with his remarks. These should be properly scrutinized. The Divisional Forest Officer must satisfy whether the programme laid down is generally adhered to and whether the checks prescribed are adequate. The Divisional Forest Officer must specifically remark whether the work of the Range Forest Officer is satisfactory or otherwise. He will point out the lapse of omission and call for the explanation of the Range Forest Officer.

(k) A register showing the particulars such as the information received from any source the date of its receipt, the action taken thereon, the date when action was taken, submission of a report for final disposal etc., should be maintained by the Range Forest Officer, Mobile Squad. This register should be scrutinized by the Divisional Forest Officer once every fortnight and entries attested. The written reports, applications, information received from various sources should be filed properly under due secrecy.

(1) The fortnightly progress reports must be submitted to the Divisional Forest Officer and the Conservator of Forests concerned by the Range Forest Officer punctually in the appended form within a week following the fortnight to which the report relates.

The proper functioning of the Mobile Squad will go a long way in curbing the incidence of illicit fellings appreciably. The formation of Mobile Squad are their duties and responsibilities as laid down herein must not be construed as divesting the regular protective staff, of their due share of responsibility. The Mobile Squads provide a counter check and serve only to supplement their effort in the scheme of tightening up the measures for protection of the forests. The ultimate responsibility for the proper functioning of the squads would rest entirely on the Divisional Forest Officers concerned.

Sd/-
(S.S.Buit)
For Chief Conservator of Forests,
Maharashtra State.

To,

The Conservators of Forests (All).

The Divisional Forest Officers (All) and

The Independent Sub-Divisional Forest Officers (All)

Fortnightly progress report of Mobile Squad _____ Division, for the fortnight ending _____

Sr. No.	Particulars of work	No. of days on which checking done	Distance covered (in Km.)	No. of offences detected.	Produce seized		Approx. value of the produce	Cases completed and sent to territorial staff.
					Description	Qty.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

1. Transit check of :
 - (a) Forest Produce in transit,
 - (b) Hutments etc.
 - (c) Conversion of forest produce in:
 - (i) Saw mills (No.of saw-mills checked and their location)
 - (ii) Kath “bhatties” (No. of Kath “bhatties” checked and their location)
 - (iii) Quarries.
 - (iv) Illicit traffic in firewood headloads by rail and other means.
2. Check of contract areas and their surrounds.
(No.of coupes and surrounds checked. Mention C.No. F.S. No.)
3. Check of Forest areas susceptible to illicit fellings.
(Mention brief particulars of areas inspected).
4. Check of Forest Check Nakas.
(Mention names of Nakas, No.of visits paid and result of the check)

ABSTRACT

No.of days spent on rout	Distance covered (in Km.)	Ranges visited	No.of information reports received	No.of offences detected	No.of cases reported to territorial charges for action	Expenditure incurred (excluding staff) (Rs.)	Any cases of special nature.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

(Accompaniment to Standing order No.38, Chapter No.IX of the Chief Conservator of Forests, Maharashtra State, Pune)

