

PARTICULARS OF ORGANISATION, FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE MINISTRY

The Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has become a separate Ministry with effect from 13.7.2011. Earlier, it was a Department, namely; Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation under the Ministry of Rural Development. Shri Jairam Ramesh is holding the charge of Minister of Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation. The Ministry is headed by the Secretary, who is assisted by two Joint Secretaries, five Director/Deputy Secretary level officers and 16 Under Secretary/Section Officers level officers.

Functions and Duties

As per the Second Schedule to Government of India Allocation of Business Rules, 1961, the subjects allotted to Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation are as under: -

- (1) Rural Water Supply (subject to overall national perspective of water planning and coordination assigned to the Ministry of Water Resources), sewage, drainage and sanitation relating to rural areas; international cooperation and technical assistance in the field.
- (2) Public cooperation, including matters relating to voluntary agencies in so far as they relate to rural water supply, sewage, drainage and sanitation in rural areas.
- (3) Cooperatives relating to the items in this list.
- (4) Co-ordination with respect to matters relating to drinking water supply and sanitation projects and issues which cover both urban and rural areas.

Notwithstanding the above allocation, rural drinking water supply as well as rural sanitation are state subjects, included in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution among the subjects that may be entrusted to Panchayats by the States. So, primarily it is the duty of the State Governments to ensure drinking water supply and sanitation facilities in the rural areas. State Governments are empowered to plan, sanction, implement and execute rural water supply projects. The role of the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation is to supplement the efforts of the State Governments by:

1. Rendering financial assistance. Presently, the financial assistance is provided through a Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP).
2. Rendering technical assistance and policy support.
3. Issuing directions for conducting survey to ascertain the status of coverage and water quality.

4. Fixing targets for coverage of habitations and rural schools and monitor the achievements of targets through periodical reports and returns as well as by conducting conferences seminars etc.

Since, State Governments are empowered to plan, sanction, implement and execute individual rural water supply projects, the details of rural water supply projects taken up are not maintained at Central level by the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation.

Regarding the rural sanitation sector, the role of the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation is to sanction projects for Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) followed by release of funds for the projects sanctioned. The implementation of the projects is, however, undertaken by the District Authorities through Project Implementing Agencies selected by the State Governments. The progress of implementation of the projects is, however, monitored at the central level through reports, returns as well as through on- line monitoring.