Indian Trade Marks Office issues Office Order – Streamlining Registry Function

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The Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks has issued a new office order dated 8 October 2025 which has revised and streamlined the functions, powers, and performance expectations for officers working in the Trade Marks Registry, GI Registry, and Copyright Office in India. The changes are designed to improve operational efficiency, uniformity and transparency in office practices. It sets forth a comprehensive and detailed restructuring of the Trade Marks Registry to address backlog reduction and establish clear performance targets and duty allocation for every officer designation.

The order includes an annexure mapping officers location-wise with designations spanning:

- Deputy Registrars - 7 in numbers
- Assistant Registrars -36 in numbers
- Senior Examiners – 47 in number
- Examiners – 64 in numbers

Each of these positions is pivotal across the five Registry branches: Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, and New Delhi, as well as the Nagpur Copyright Office. Every Registry is staffed with multiple officers in each designation who are assigned specific tasks such as hearings, opposition, rectification, codifications, application disposal, GI/copyright file scrutiny, and more.

Designation-Wise Duties and Responsibilities

To ensure accountability, transparency, and streamlined workflow across all branches of the Trade Marks Registry, the office order clearly delineates the functions, powers and performance expectations for each officer designation. This structured framework not only defines the operational scope of every officer from Examiner to Senior Joint Registrar but also emphasizes efficiency, uniformity and the quality of output at every stage of the trademark life cycle.

Each designation carries distinct responsibilities aligned with its level of authority and expertise. Examiners and Senior Examiners form the backbone of the Registry's examination and scrutiny process, while Assistant and Deputy Registrars exercise quasi-judicial powers in adjudicatory

matters. The Joint and Senior Joint Registrars provide overarching administrative, supervisory and policy-level guidance, ensuring consistent practices and compliance with statutory provisions across all regional offices.

Outlined below are the specific duties and functional responsibilities for each designation as prescribed under the new directive.

Examiner of Trade Marks

- Codification: Assign Vienna Classification codes for figurative elements in trademark applications.
- Examination: Conduct both formal and substantive examination of TM and GI applications.
- Reporting: Prepare detailed, reasoned examination and scrutiny reports; communicate discrepancies explicitly and electronically.
- Post-Registration: Handle TM-P requests, scrutinize copyright NOC requests, dispose TM-M amendments.
- Backlog Drive: Assigned additional duties during special campaigns to tackle pendency or other office exigencies.

Senior Examiner of Trade Marks

- Oversight: Conduct and oversee all examiner duties with enhanced authority.
- Hearings: Conduct show cause, opposition, and rectification hearings; pass speaking orders.
- Section In-Charge: Manage specific sections of the Registry, ensure quality and timely disposal in show-cause and opposition matters.
- Quality Control: Actively participate in performance campaigns and liquidation drives.

Assistant/Deputy Registrar

- Tribunal Role: Adjudicate as tribunal for TM/GI matters; pass reasoned orders in oppositions, rectifications, renewals, and well-known mark applications.
- Personal Oversight: Personally oversee hearings, post-registration changes, copyright NOC matters.
- Case Management: Ensure completion of pending work before transfer; manage specific case assignments under Registrar's directions.
- Additional Duties: Handle other responsibilities allocated by Registrar or during special campaigns.

Joint/Senior Joint Registrar

- Administration: Supervise administrative and establishment matters for all registry offices.
- Quality Supervision: Oversee application processing, registration, and post-registration actions with accuracy and consistency in orders.
- Training: Plan and impart training; build capacity as the CBU nodal person.
- MIS & Coordination: Submit monthly MIS of Registry output, coordinate queries with DPIIT, communicate with WIPO on international TM/GI matters.
- Regulatory Role: Handle amendments to TM, GI, and Copyright Acts and rules, coordinate disposal of grievances, map staff responsibilities in accordance with administrative needs.
- Guidance: Advise and guide subordinate officers; may be assigned additional tasks or tribunal functions as authorized.

Effective and Uniform Office Practices

- Use of international Vienna Classification standards for codification.
- Completion of all examination steps per Trade Marks Act, with clear justification and reasoning for objections under Sections 9, 11, and 13.
- Reasoned decisions for all amendments and rectifications.
- Electronic recording of all communications and officer notes, with a strict preference for avoiding vague or general statements.

Performance Targets – Officer & Task Wise

To ensure measurable progress within the Trade Marks Registry, the revised office order introduces specific monthly performance benchmarks for officers across all designations.

The table below summarizes the designation-wise and task-specific monthly targets as outlined in the office order:

Task / Designation	Monthly Target
Vienna Codification	10,000 applications
Formality Applications	1,800 applications
Substantive Examination	900 applications
Approval of examination of TM application with proper justification	2,000 applications
Pre-Registration Amendments	700 applications
Post-Registration Actions	250 disposals
Show Cause Hearings	700 applications
Opposition/Rectification Hearings	70
Copyright examination	250 applications
Copyright hearing	500 applications

Performance is evaluated on both quantitative and qualitative parameters. Targets are subject to relaxation for officers assigned additional responsibilities or acting as in-charges for sections. Officers may be deputed on special campaigns to further liquidate backlogs as directed by the Registrar.

Procedural and Compliance Highlights

The office order lays down clear procedural and compliance protocols governing examination, hearings, and disposal of trademark, GI, and copyright matters.

- All examination and hearing orders must be reasoned and recorded electronically.
- Applications should generally be disposed of at the first hearing unless adjournment is justified.
- A maximum of three adjournments is allowed per party in application hearings, and two in oppositions, upholding efficiency and finality.
- Officers transferred to other offices before disposal must conclude pending orders unless directed otherwise.

Mapping Officer Location, Designation and Assigned Work

The order annexure comprehensively lists each officer by name, place, designation, group, and their primary assigned function, ensuring transparency in duty allocation and organizational accountability. This mapping helps applicants and stakeholders understand precisely which officers are responsible for which functions in each Registry branch and section.

Positive Impact: Transparency, Accountability & Backlog Reduction

This restructuring ensures clear responsibility mapping, enhanced transparency and measurable accountability for each officer and designation. By setting standardized workflows and mandatory performance goals, the Registry aims to swiftly reduce the backlog of cases, improve consistency and quality in decisions and deliver better service to brands, rights holders and applicants across the world. This exhaustive directive represents a major positive step toward robust trademark protection, streamlined office processes and responsive stakeholder management in the Indian Trade Marks Registry.

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