

RTI as a Tool for Unearthing Inefficient Practices in Public Bodies

CPDI RTI Case Study

Issue: Misuse of official vehicles.

Background: The misuse of official vehicles is a common knowledge. The log-book gives true account of the whereabouts of an official vehicle. CPDI has submitted information requests to all the Deputy Commissioners of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan and District Coordination Officers of Punjab under relevant laws of the land to have access to copies of the official vehicles under their use. The purpose of these information requests is to see how these log-books are being maintained by public officials. This case study is based on one such information request to Deputy Commissioner, Karachi East.

Date of Submitting Information Request: 29 March, 2013

RTI Law Referred: Sindh Freedom of Information Ordinance 2006

Information Request:

Certified copies of log book of each vehicle under the use of the Deputy Commissioner

Responding to the Ombudsman's order, DC Karachi (East) Sami Siddiqui submitted: "Since about last 12/13 years, the practice of maintenance of Log Book in respect of any government vehicle has been discontinued on the one hand and the Government of Sindh is not providing printed Log Books on the other hand. Hence this office is unable to provide certified copies of the Log Books in the present circumstances".

Action Taken:

Information was shared with media and it led to an investigative piece published in 'The News International' on October 23, 2013 with following headline:

['No logbooks of thousands of official cars in Sindh helping criminals'](#)

Letter was sent to Sindh Ombudsman on December 02, 2013 asking Ombudsman to direct Sindh government to publish log-books and ensure proper maintenance of log-book for each official vehicle.

Lessons Learnt:

This case study shows that RTI is a great tool for investigative reporting. Umar Cheema filed an investigative report based on data provided by an RTI activist. Journalists can file investigative stories on their own by filing information requests.



RTI as a Tool for Unearthing Inefficient Practices in Public Bodies:

This case study reveals how RTI can be an effective tool for unearthing inefficient practices in public bodies. RTI request revealed that log-books of official vehicles were not being maintained by public bodies in Sindh. It also revealed that the government of Sindh had not printed log-books for 12—13 years.