Background Material for DVD Course

DISTRICT OFFICE MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

This handout on 'DISTRICT OFFICE MANUAL' is prepared to help as a reference material.It is not the text of what is presented in the Digital Versatile (Video) Disc (DVD).This is a brief synopsis on the subject bringing out the important points of the District Office Manual.

The Handout contains two parts.

Part I : Synopsis of the DOM

The contents covered in the synopsis are :

1. General Discipline
2. Attendence
3. Organisation
4. Office System
5. Opening and Registration of Tappals
6. Registration in the Personal Register
7. Maintenance of Files
8. Noting
9. Current File Arrangement
10. Referencing
11. Linked Files
12. Drafting
13. Various Trypes of Communication, their form and purpose
14. Reminder Diary
15. Disposals
16. Disposal Jackets
17. Call Book
18. Periodicals
19. Fair Copying and Despatch
20. Prevention and Checking of Arrears and Delays
21. Indexing of the Title
22. Records,Filing,Maintenance and coustody
23. Responsibility and Assistants and Heads of Sections
24. Submission of Files at Headquarters and Camp
25. Economy in the use of Stationery

Part II :Questions and Answers i.e. as given in the DVD on DOM

DISTRICT OFFICE MANUAL

The Tottenham System of office procedure, as prescribed in the Districe Office Manual, mainly deals with the procedure to be followed for conducting routine work in Government offices.Following are some important aspects:

1 GENERAL DISCIPLINE

Discipline is the essential prerequisite for the efficient functioning of any office or organisation.Punctuality,Promptness, regular attendence and obedience are the basic needs of discipline.Cleanliness and orderliness,quite and dignified behaviour,observance of silence during working hours and mutually courtesy among the members of the staff will be conductive to the smooth running of the office.Divulgence of official information and secrets is a serious offence which should not be done at any cost.Lastly, honesty is the most essential code of conduct without which all other qualities are useless.

2. ATTENDENCE

2.1. All Government servents are expected to attend office from 10.30 a.m. to 5.00p.m.on all working days.An attendence register should be maintained and all establishment members should initial it as soon as they come to office.A grace time of ten minutes is allowed after which the attendence register should be closed.Permission to attend late by one hour or leave ofice one hour earlier, not exceeding three times in each case, can be allowed with prior sanction. Any member who attends late should sign after entering the hour of arrival.If he attends office before 2.00p.m.with or without permission it will be treated as half day casual leave and attendence after 2.00p.m. will be treated as a full day's casual leave.One day's casual leave should be deducted for every 3 days of late attendence.Casual leave not exceeding 15days can be availed with prior sanction.It can be clubbed with any public holiday or optional holiday.However such a spell of leave should not exceed 10 days.

2.2. COMPENSATORY LEAVE(CPL):

If a Government Servant is directed to attend the office on a public holiday, he will be permitted, by prior sanction, to avail leave for a working day in its place.Not more than ten days of compensatory leave may be granted in a calender year and no such leave can be availed after expiry of six months from the public holiday for which it is

sanctioned.Not more than seven such compensatory leave days may be accumulated.(This concession is available for ministerial staff)

3 ORGANISATION

For convenient and smooth transaction of official business, the office has to be divided into sections, comprising of three or four or more Assistants according to the work load, ensuring equitable distribution of work among the Assistants.Each section will be denoted by an alphabetical letter and each Assistant by a figure suffixed to the letter by which the section is denoted.The work of each assistant has to be specified by an office order issued by the Head of the Office. The section head should exercise the control and supervision over the Assistants in his section and ensure that the correspondence is promptly attend to.He will also be responsible for promptness in faircopying and despatch of tappals.

4 OFFICE SYSTEM

The method of conducting official business is known as office system.The various stages of official business, starting from opening of tappals to consignment of files to records, come under office system.The progress of work at various stages will be watched through appropriate registers prescribed under the District Office Manual.The catalogue of registers to be maintained to conduct official business is given at pages 6 to 9 of the District Office Manual.

5. OPENING AND REGISTRATION OF TAPPALS

5.1 There should be an office regarding distribution of tappals in any office.

5.2 Generally, soon after the tappal/dak is received,the tappal should be opened, preferably in the presence of the Head of office or his personal Assistant or any authorised officer. Important communications such as letters from Government, Heads of departments, D.O. letters and confidential letters addressed to the Head of the office must necessarily be opened in the presence of the Head of the office and seen by him before distribution to Assistants.

5.3 The officer, in whose presence tappal/dak is opened, must persue the tappals and give appropriate instructions at the stage of perusal of tappal itself, particularly in respect of urgent and important papers indicating the action to be taken.The tappals Assistants will be there after sort out the tappals section wise and give

them numbers, serially as per the Distribution Register.Cash and other valubles will be entered in the Security Register.When the tappals with the Distribution Register is received in the section, the section head should go through them, note the instructions of officers, if any, on them and then mark them to the concern Assistants to whom the tapals are marked in the Distribution Register should acknowldge them without fail.Otherwise, it would become difficult to account for the unacknowledged ones in the Distribution Register at a later stage, especially at the time of office inspection.Paper marked F (to be failed), XL DL Dis (to be lodged), need not be entered in the Distribution Register.

6. REGISTRATION

6.1 The tappal received by clerks contain either new cases (for which there is no pending file) or old cases (for which there is a pending file). Tappals received by clerks should be registered in the Personal Register without delay. New cases have to be registered as fresh currents noting the details, as required in col.4. Old cases have to be clubbed with the pending currents duly noting their particulars in col.9 and 10 of the PR. A current which originates in the office is also registered in the Personal Register like any other new case, but in col.4 the word "arising" has to be noted under the head "title".

6.2 Under the head"title" in col.4 of the Personal Register, appropriate main head and subhead should be given from the list of index heads in Appendix A of the DOM.

6.3 While opening a new Personal Register at the beginning of the calender year, sufficient number of blank pages should be left to bring forward the currents of the previous year, which could not be closed by 31st March.Not more than three currents have to be entered on the page and they have to be divided by red lines. The main head has to be underlined in red ink.

7. MAINTENANCE OF FILES

7.1 A file includes both current and note file. The current file comprises of incoming and outgoing references and other intermediary correspondence other than routine reminders. The note file is the one on which notes are written summarising the facts reported in the reference, citing relevant provisions of law, rules,and orders of Govt., or other superior authorities,wherever required,and pointing out the matters requiring orders or clarifications.

7.2 The pages of the current file and the pages of the note file have to be tagged separately. The pages of the current file have to be numbered in red ink and the pages of the note file in black or blue ink, chronologically. Files have to be maintained neatly.

8. NOTING

8.1 Notings should be brief and to the point and should be in simple language. The object of the note is to present,in the most intelligible, condensed and convenient form possible, the facts of the case, accompanied by a brief facts of the case, if any. Points at issue requiring orders / clarifications etc. are to be examined with reference to any useful precedent, rule or Law and put up in order to enable the officers to arrive at quick and correct decisions.

8.2 Reproduction of facts already available in the file is not necessary. While drawing attention to the facts already available in the file, any other important or new points and precedents, if any, could be mentioned in the note. A leading note is improper and should be avoided.

9. CURRENT FILE ARRANGEMENT

The current file, with papers arranged chronologically, numbered in red ink and tagged together neatly, should be put up along with previous papers, or disposals obtained from Records for reference in flat file pad marked 'Ordinary', ' Urgent', 'Very Urgent' as may be appropriate. Statements and maps should be placed for reference below the current file.

10. REFERENCING

Referencing is one of the important elements of noting or drafting for quick and proper disposal of papers.Facts of a case previously noted or reported,relevant previous decisions or orders,Precedents,authorities and provisions of law should be aptly referred to in the notes. Any relevant portion in the pending file should also be referred to. Referencing is made by noting the page number of the current file or note file and the disposal number.G.O.No.Name of the Act., code or manual.Reference should be done in pencil in the margin of the note file or draft put up. Where disposals are put up for reference, they should be flagged. The flag of each disposals or statement put up should be denoted by an alphabetical letter. Flags attached to the disposals should be pinned only to the outer dockets. Flags should not be attached to any page of the C.F. or N.F. or to any page of any code, act, book or stock file.

11. LINKED FILES

Where pending files are put up for reference they should be linked to the main file on which orders have to be passed, by placing them underneath of the main file. The main file and linked file should be tied together with the strings of the linked file, if there is only one or more than one linked files. A slip should be fastened to the flap of each linked file indicating L.F.I., L.F.II and so on. The slip fastened to the top file should indicate "top file for orders and linked file for reference".

12. DRAFTING

12.1 After orders are passed on note file draft should be put up. In simple cases, where discussions on note is not necessary, draft may be put up along with the note.

12.2 The draft should being with a proper title,whether it is memo,or letter or proceedings. The title should almost be the same as shown in the note file,with suitable modifications to indicate the exact nature of the reference made or orders passed.

12.3 Below the title, the references received from outside and the references sent, other than routine reminders, should be cited in chronological order.

12.4 The draft should be on the lines of the approved note taking into account the observations and comments made by the officers and orders passed.It should be in easy and natural style,and concise and at the same time comprehensive. Words or phrases which lead to ambiguity, confusion and necesitate looking back for date,person or thing referred to should be avoided. The following should also be avoided (i) long words (ii) foreign or classical phrases, such as "so impertinent", "so many time", "not too bad" etc., (v) phrases which show discourtesy, "care to" (vi) short abbreviations (vii) split infinates etc.

13. VARIOUS TYPES OF COMMUNICATIONS, THEIR FORM AND PURPOSE

13.1 The varous types of communication are (i) Memo (ii) Letter (iii) D.O.Letter (iv) Proceedings and (v) Telegram.

(i) MEMO is a reference made to a subordinate or to petitoner.

(ii) LETTER is a reference made to an officer, often equivalent in rank, or to an officer of other department.

(iii) D.O.LETTER is generally written where personal attention of the officer concerned is required to be bestowed.

(iv) PROCEEDINGS is the final orders passed with reference to certain powers invested

(v) TELEGRAM should be brief and intelligible. It should be accompanied by a post copy.

13.2 The communication should be precise and brief,setting forth the points in which clarifications or orders are required.

13.3 The proceedings should be complete in itself, with the title at the head, followed by such description as the communication with reference to which the proceedings are passed as will be sufficient to enable any officer to whom it is communicated to trace the previous correspondence on the subject in his office without any delay.

14. REMINDER DIARY

To watch the action and ensure prompt replies to Government letters or other superiors, to watch action on urgent and important references from others and ensure prompt replies to them, reminder diary should be maintained by each clerk/section head.

15. DISPOSALS

15.1 The various kinds of disposals are :

1. R.Dis to be retained permanently

2. D.Dis to be retained till the prescribed period of retention (10 years normally. Period can be extended, where necessary by obtaining order for further retention.)

3. L.Dis to be retained till one (or three) years.

4. N.Dis to be returned in original

5. F.Dis to be filed

6. X.L.Dis to be filed without numbering.

7. X.N.Dis to be returned without numbering

The nature of disposal depends on the importance of each file.

15.2 Government orders and proceedings of Heads of departments have to be filed normally. But, some of those Government orders or proceedings, require further action at times.Such papers should be registered in Personal Registers and final disposal given as R.D is or D.D is as is necessary.

15.3 Great care should be exercised in marking the nature of disposal. The Section head is responsible for marking the correct nature of disposal on the paper. For clasifying a disposal under "R" series orders of the head of the office have to be obtained. The Heads of the departments have since been empowered to prescribe suitable period of retention based upon the peculiar nature or work done in their departments and the estimated period of utility for reference, after getting such record retention schedules approved by the concerned administrative departments of the Secretariat (vide a new note added under para. 63 of the DOM in G.O.Ms. No.65 GAD (Ser.C) dated 27.12.82). Consequently, in some departments new disposals i.e., "K.Dis" etc., with 3 years of retention or 5 years of retention have been prescribed.

15.4 Further,as per the amendment issued to para.80 of the DOM in the above G.O.Ms. No.65 GAD (Services.C) dt.27.12.82 at the initial stage of sending disposal in the "L.Dis" and any other series with limited periods of retention for less than ten years,it should be examined closely whether the disposal needs to be rescrutinised after the prescribed peroid of retention and to be certified as fit for destruction or for further retention. The docket sheet of each such disposal should therefore carry a certificate to the effect. "To be destroyed straightaway / sent back for rescrutiny in the year ..... after the prescribed retention period" (words not applicable to a disposal to be struck off). R Disposals require scrutiny after 50 years in order to see whether they still require to be preserved or not.

16. DISPOSAL JACKETS

The R and D disposals should be covered with brown paper jackets and the entries should be made on the jackets as instructed in paragraph 65 of DOM.

17. CALL BOOK

References of the Government and Heads of departments calling for a report

after one year or so, and such other references where report is due after one year or so and where no action is necessary for more than six months will be entered in Call book closing the current in the Personal Register. The tappal clerk or record keeper will be responsible for the proper maintenance of the Call book. When the time noted in col.(5) of the Call book for taking action approaches, the current should be reopened giving a fresh current number and entering in the personal register. As soon as this is done, the entry in the Call book should be rounded off.

18. PERIODICALS

The purpose of the periodicals will be defeated if they are not sent or received in time. To ensure receipt of incoming periodicals in time advance reminders should be issued. Where an outgoing periodical has to be compiled on the basis fo figures furnished or reports made in the incoming periodicals, the compilation should be done expeditiously and outgoing periodicals despatched in time. Each periodical will be assigned a periodical number. There will be only one set of serial numbers for periodicals in an office, depending on the nature i.e. whether weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, annual etc. A Consolidated Periodically Register has to be maintained for the entire office. A Periodical Register showing the incoming and outgoing periodicals, to be dealt with by each clerk has to be maintained by him. Periodicals should not be given R, D or L.Disposal. They should be simply filed with the periodical numbers only.

19. FAIR COPYING AND DESPATCH

19.1 Fair copying and despatch should be done without any delay. The Superintendent, Fair copying section should see that there is no delay at any stage of fair copying, comparing and despatch where there is pool system of typing in any office.

19.2 When the Superintendent, Fair copying section, receives an approved draft for Fair copying, he should check up whether all the particulars necesary for typing are available on the draft, such as the reference or disposal number, if it is a disposal, its nature, person or persons to whom it is to be sent, the enclosures to be sent with it, etc. He should also see if it is a R or D disposal, whether the Index slips in duplicate showing the title as noted in the draft has accompanied the draft. After satisfying that all the above details are available on the draft, he should give it to the typist for typing. Soon after they are typed, they should be compared with the approved draft, get them signed by the Head of office or concerned officer and despatched.

19.3 A Fair Copy Register as in Form IV, should be maintained in the section. It

serves as a despatch register as well. Now-a-days, in many of the offices, section wise typists are allotted. The Head of the section should check the Fair Copy Register maintained by the typist at the end of each day to ensure that no delays are made in Fair copying of the approved drafts. in most of the offices, a separate despatch section is organised. For postal delivery,stamp account has also to be maintained besides the Postal Despatch Register. For communications to be delivered locally by hand a separate register "Local delivery book" should be maintained and should be periodically checked.

PREVENTION AND CHECKING OF ARREARS AND DELAY

20.1 The section heads should exercise effective supervision over the assistants in their sections to prevent delays and arrears. The periodical checking of Personal, Periodical and other Registers even with long pending currents critically,will be an effective check to prevent delays and arrears.The Superintendent and the officer concerned should point out the delays and other irregualarities,in the running note file accompanying the personal and periodical register put up for check,as per the programme of check drawn up and issue suitable instructions for avoidance of delays and rectification of defects. Compliance with the in structions should be insisted within 48 hours and non-compliance should be taken serious note of.

20.2 Reminder should be issued promply. A Reminder Diary should be maintained by each clerk for this purpose, which should also be checked periodically along with PRs etc.

20.3 Arrear Lists showing the pendency of currents, should be put up with the Personal Register. Long pending files should receive special attention of the section head.

20.4 Business return is prepared every half year to enable the head of office or his superiors to watch the progress of business in the office and to take suitable action for the reduction of pendency and arrears.

21. INDEXING OF THE TITLE

Preparation of index slips and their filing in the manner laid down in paragraphs 100 to 102 should carefully be done. The index title should correspond with the heading of the final draft and be normally identical with the entry made in col.4 of the personal

register. One copy should be retained with the clerk and the duplicate copy should be retained in records. At the end of the year, the record clerk should prepare a general index register showing all the R.Dis and D.Dis files separately. The Index Register should be in the alphabetical order for ready reference. It should be typed or renewed and supplied to all sections and all officers.

22. RECORDS - FILING - MAINTENANCE & CUSTODY

Before the receipt of any disposal (handed over to the record keeper) is acknowledged, the record keeper should verify whether all the pages in the disposal have been numbered, securely stitched and are in tact, whether the disposal number has been correctly noted and the disposal has been properly docketed, and if it is a R or D disposal and whether duplicate copy of index slip has accompanied it. According to the amendments issued to the DOM para 81, disposals have to be arranged in the record room basing on the year of disposal and not according to the year of the current as is obtaining hitherto.

23. RESPONSIBILITY OF CLERKS AND HEADS OF SECTIONS

Every assistant is responsible for the safe custody of the files, registers, stock files and other records in his charge. If any document submitted for orders bears a court fee or adhesive stamp, he will be responsible for seeing that it is punched. This does not however absolve the heads of sections from the responsibility from seeing that stampos are punched.

24. SUBMISSION OF FILES AT HEAD-QUARTERS OR CAMP

24.1 All the files should be sent to the officer concerned who is on tour in locked tappal boxes preferably steel boxes, with an invoice. The camp assistant of the officer should verify the tappals recieved with the invoice. The same procedure should be adopted when tappals are returned from camp. The invoice will be prepared by the camp assistant and the tappals on receipt in office will be verified by the tappal assistant.

24.2 When an officer is at head quarters, papers for orders, approval and signature should be submitted daily in one or more batched.

24.3 Confidential papers should be in separate confidential boxed locked and sealed.

25. PRECAUTIONS AGAINST FIRE

25.1 The precautions against fire to be observed in public offices are given in appendix-c.

25.2 Required fire fighting equipment should be kept and they should be maintained in good condition. Office staff should be given practical drill. The head of the office should nominate an office for conducting the drill.

26. ECONOMY IN THE USE OF STATIONERY

Utmost economy should be observed in the use of stationery as per the instructions contained in para 140 of the District office manual at page 59 to 61.

WE CANT SPELL S_CCESS

WITHOUT U

DISTRICT OFFICE MANUAL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. 1. What is meant by office system

A: The procedure prescribed to run the routine work in an office is called office system

2. Name the system followed in government offices

A: Tottenham system

3. In which manual is the Tottenham system explained

A: District Office Manual

4. Why is an office divided into different sections?

A: The office is divided into sections. To run the office work smoothly and effectively and for equal distribution of work among the staff members.

5. How will the progress of work be supervised in an office?

A: The progress of work in an office is monitored by maintenance and checking of various registers.

6. What are the various registers prescribed in DOM?

A: The various Registers prescribed in DOM are : Distribution register, personal register, periodical register, Fair copy register, Dispatch register, call book, Security register, Record issue register etc.

7. What are the basic elements of Discipline?

A: Basic elements are Punctuality, promptness, Regular attendance, obedience etc

8. What are the present office timings ?

A: 10.30 am to 5.00 pm

9. What is grace time?

A: An employee is permitted to attend 10 minutes after the office timing i.e.10.30 am This time is called grace time

10. What is late attendance?

A: The time of attending the office is 10.30 am. with grace time it is 10.40 am. If any employee attends later than this it is called late attendance and it is permitted for one hour ie.upto 11.30 am only.

11. What is forfeiture of CL?

A: If any employee attends office late without permission for every 3 such lates one C.L. will be forefeited. Such deductions of Casual leave is called forfeifure of CL

12. How many days of leave can be availed at a time including CL, OH & PH?

A: One can avail leave including CL, OH and PH not exceeding 10 days

13. Who receives Tappals?

A: Tappals are received by tappal clerk

14. Who opens DO & confidential letters

A: DO and confidential letters are to be opened by the officer to whom they are addressed.

15. Why security register is to be maintained?

A: Where Cheques and drafts are received in office, to take special care to be about them a security register is required to be maintained.

16. In how many ways can currents be classified into? Name them?

A: Two types of currents. Old and new case

17. What is a new case?

A: When currents are recieved by the Asst, if there is no file already exists on the subject and it is a new case such currents are called new cases.

18. What is clubbed current?

A: Unlike a new case when current is received, if there is already existing file dealing with same subjects such currents are called clubbed currents.

19. What is arising current?

A: Unlike a fresh current which is received from outside office, the arising current originates within the section.When a new file is opened within the section without any reference from outside it called arising current.

20. What is the periodicity of PR? Who will maintain it ?

A: The personal register is maintained by the dealing assistant the periodicity is one calendar a year i.e. 1st January to 31st December.

21. Why are some pages left at the beginnig of a new PR?

A: Though the PR is maintained for a calender year, it will be kept upto 31st March.On 1st April the undisposed currents of previous year, same pages are left at the beginning of a new PR.

22. What are the parts in a file?

A: There are two parts in a file, current file and note file.

23. What is Current file?

A: Current file consists the communication received in the office and sent by office.

24. What is a note file?

A: note file consists(facts of the case,rule position,precedents)if any submitted by the section and the orders passed by the competent authority.

25. Why left margin for the front page and right margin for second page left in a note file?

A: To facilitate stitching of the record, left margin in the front page and right margin in the second page is left in a note file.

26. Why flags should be kept for stock files, codes and manuals?

A: If flags are kept frequently using pins, it may destroy the page.To avoid flags, should not be kept in the stock files,codesand manuals.

27. Where flag should be kept for disposal?

A: Flags should be kept to the outer docket sheet of a disposal.

28. What point should be mentioned in a note?

A: While writing note facts and issues, rule position should be mentioned in the note.

29. How a note should be written?

A: A note should be intelligent, convenient and condensed form.

30. How referencing should be made in a note file?

A: While writing a note, if a particular current file or note file is referred the no.of

pages should be mentioned in the note.Similarly, if a record is referred it should be flagged and the flag number and record number mentioned in pencil in the margin for stock file, page number referred, manual-rule number and page no. etc.

31. In what Ink the page number and current file should be numbered

A: The page number in the current file should be numbered in redink.

32. When can a draft be put up along with note?

A: A draft can be put up along with a note, when it is a simple case.

33. What is the responsibility of the section in submitting note file.?

A: The responsibility of the section is to give relevent data to take decision in a particular file.

34. What are the types of communication used in government ofices?

A: Types of communications used in offices are : Memo,DO, Proceedings, Telegram,telephone message, faxmessage, E-mail etc.,

35. To whom and how memo should be written?

A: Memo is generally written to a subordinate and a petitioner in 3rd person signed by designation.

36. To whom letter should be written?

A: Letter is written to all persons irrespective of whether they are subordinates or higher officers or equals.

37. What is the purpose of a DO?

A: DO letter is written to draw the personal attention of the officer on any issue.

38. What are proceedings?

A: Proceedings is the final order of an officer in accordance with the powers delegated to him.

39. What are the basic rules to be followed in drafting?

A: The basic rules to be followed in drafting are simplicity, integrity.

40. List out different types of disposals?

A: Types of disposals are, Rdis, D dis, L dis, XL dis, N dis, XN dis.

41. What is the retention period of file closed in L Dis?

A: The retention period of L dis is one year.

42. What is the retention period of D dis?

A: The retention period of D Dis is 10 years.

43. What is the retention period of R dis?

A: R dis is to be retained permanently.

44. What are the aspects in disposal jacket?

A: Brown disposal jacket should be used for R dis & D.Disposals.

45. How to check the delays in fair copying and dispatch?

A: Disposal number, date of disposal, No of current and note file pages, whether it is necessary to review before destruction should be mentioned on the outer docket.Inside the previous and future disposal number entered.

46. What is call book?

A: When no action is needed in a file for more than 6 months it is sent to call book.On the specified data the record asst will send back the file to Asst.when it is sent to call book it is treated as disposal and when reopened a fresh number is given.This call book is for reopening of the issues on the specified date.

47. Why periodical register is maintained?

A: Periodical register is maintained to moniter prompt receipt and sending incoming and outgoing returns.

48. How to check delays in routine office work?

A: Various registers like personal register, periodical register, call book, re-minder diary, call book are prescribed in the section to check delays in routine office work.

49. How Tottenham system is useful in office administration?

A: Tottenham system prescribes proceedure in day to day office work Proper maintainance of register will help for smooth and effective functioning of the office administration.

Long ago a note has been sent to the works department to inform the personnel officer that the sanitary superintendent should issue orders to the assistant superintendent that this room should be, ready before you arrive in the morning !