Techological Change: Prepare for a Roller Coaster Ride

Change is a word with many connotations. It is natural (change is the natural process that triggers evolution), mathematical (Calculus, a branch of mathematics is actually science of change), social (renaissance is but a major social change). We can list many more. And change is something that every one of us experience. When we change vocation, when we travel, when we get married... Change has many effects. It stresses us, in both pleasant and unpleasant ways, it raises new problems to be solved, it topples economics... and we cannot escape facing it.

E-governance is a sector that needs to address change. The sector scales up the challenge due to the enormous public interface. Change in e-governance can arise from technological changes, political changes, public perception changes, statutory changes, security threats etc. Globalisation, continuous evolution of mobile technologies and social media, socio-economic development of the country and consequent changes in aspirations are all triggers for change. Some of these can be considered as hard changes, while others as soft changes. Individuals from the side of both government and general public may have to go through change management. The cardinal principle is to absorb the change, as much as possible, in the Govt side, leaving the user unstressed. An example is public websites. At one time they were viewed using PCs, but today they may be viewed through a variety of devices including tabs, smart phones etc. The web sites adjust themselves to suit the display device, leaving users blissfully ignorant of the changes.

We may be in for sweeping changes in technology soon, perhaps we are already are. When we post a photo in the Facebook, we are not surprised that it instantaneously recognises who is with you. We are issued a SIM without any paperwork, by simply providing our fingerprint in a tiny reader. The Internet of Things (IoT) is fast emerging with advent of low cost sensors. Machine Learning technology has taken a rebirth. Driverless cars might completely disrupt many systems and infrastructure (As accidents may cease to happen and ownership of cars may also vanish, automobile insurance industry may have to wind up!). The concept of money has been challenged by crypto currencies such as bit-coins, raising hitherto unimagined challenges in world economy. Well, change itself is changing. E-governance stake-holders need to ready themselves for a roller coaster drive.

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SPARK Authorizations

SPARK authorization categories are as follows;

C (Controller of Spark): 'C' access is only for SPARK Higher Authorities and SPARK Database personnel, through this login 'C' user can update/add/delete slabs and rates like DA rates, pay scales, HRA etc. Designations, authorizations, office, add/delete bank details. Cancellation of arrear bills can also be done through this login.

U (Master Trainer): SPARK provides 'U' access to SPARK Master trainers, Treasury helpdesk and Department Master trainers. Through this 'U' login, user can view/edit employees' Present service / salary details in SPARK.

M (Department Management Users): Department Management Users are given this 'M' access. This helps the user to view the employee details of all employees in their Department, M user can provide 'I' access to the employees in their Department, also they can reset password for DDO's/Establishment users. Code master option, employee list and the list of employees whose salary have been processed and list of employees whose processing is pending can be viewed from this interface, leave surrender Processing/pending status of employees in their department can also be viewed through

Who are eligible for DMU privilege?

Government officials who have expertise in dealing with establishment matters as well as SPARK software operations can apply for DMU access. Authorisation from concerned department heads and no objection certificate should also be furnished for applying the same.

How can an employee get DMU privilege?

Application form is available on the website www.info.spark.gov.in. The filled applications have to be sent to the email id: info@spark.gov.in with DMT Application as subject.

What are the duties /roles of DMU?

Resetting password, providing ‘I’ access to individual users and providing necessary directions to employees for SPARK related issues.
**SPARK authorizations and user privileges**

### V (Editing by Treasury):
This authorization given to treasury officers for locking and unlocking employee details.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>What are the privileges given to V users?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Locking &amp; unlocking privilege, the V user can lock/unlock the employees' details coming under the concerned treasury's purview.</td>
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</table>

### Who can unlock treasury locked employee details?

'V' users can only unlock the treasury locked employee details, for unlocking the details the DDO has to contact the concerned treasury.

### W (Head of the Department):
W access is given to Head of the Department, for viewing the employee details of the employees working under his/her office. Editing option is restricted for this access.

### R (District Level User):
This access is given to district level heads of government departments and this facility enables the user to monitor the employees working under their superintendence. User can only view the details, data editing is not possible through this option.

### X (NPS cell):
Bulk file uploading facility has been enabled for NPS regional users, for uploading the PRAN details through front end. Files to be uploaded should be in .CVC format. This option will help to expedite the NPS details updation processes in SPARK.

### D (DDO's (Accounts) User):
Drawing and Disbursing Officers are given 'D' Access. Along with 'D' access, DDO's are given 'E', 'P' & 'Q' accesses, this enables the processing of service and salary related matters of employees working in that office, Establishment management, Leave Processing, Promotion, Transfer and Posting activities are done through DDO login.

### E (Establishment Admin User):
This access given to the Users, who manages the Establishment /Service Book of employees, E user can enter employee's service/salary details in SPARK.

### P (Leave Processing):
DDO's are given 'P' access along with their D access to enter /process leave details thorough SPARK.

### Q (Promotion-Transfer and Posting):
DDO's are given 'Q' access along with their D access to process Transfer and posting related procedures through SPARK.

### N (Establishment Administrator):
SPARK Provides 'N' access to AEO's and DEO's, they can authenticate/approve the aided school employee details through this login, Editing not possible through this access.

### F (Property Returns Admin):
'F' access is given to authorities who handle the Property Returns in the Department. Approving and verification of Employee submitted property returns are being done through this access.

### B (Co-operative Societies etc):
SPARK PMU gives ‘B’ access to Co-operative societies to submit co-operative request for making recovery from employee’s salary.

### I (Individual User):
'I' access enables the user to view their Personal service and salary details, loan details, PF account details, AG pay slips , salary drawn details and salary slips.

### O (Data entry operator):
Currently ‘G’ access not in use. During the initial phases of SPARK implementation ‘O’ access given to users for doing bulk data entry work like entering employees service book details in SPARK DB.

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### Forms for Setting User Privileges in SPARK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMS</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FORM 1</td>
<td>New Employee Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORM 2</td>
<td>Nomination/ Change of nomination of Department Management User (DMU)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORM 3</td>
<td>Nomination /Change of Nomination of Drawing and Disbursing Officer(DDO)/ Establishment Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORM 5</td>
<td>For Setting Controlling Officer in SPARK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Forms for Setting Office Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMS</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FORMAT 01</td>
<td>New Office Instalation in SPARK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FROM 6</td>
<td>HRA Change Request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORM 7</td>
<td>Change DDO code/Dept code/treasury code /Office name in spark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Please avoid printing of this document to protect environment.
Recent Software updates/Improvements

Pay revision Arrear 3rd Instalment Reprocessing option

SPRAK PMU enabled the pay revision arrear reprocessing module to reprocess the 3rd Instalment pay revision arrears of excluded employees, who had been excluded through ‘Exclude Employee’ option due to excess/short drawal made in the previous instalments of pay revision arrear or by mistake.

Before performing Pay Revision Arrear Reprocessing step for the employees, who have had Excess/Short drawal issues in previous instalments of Pay Revision Arrear, the user should ensure that all necessary changes are done in employee details to correct the irregular drawal (Excess/Short drawal) happened in previous instalments of pay revision arrears. It is the responsibility of the DDO to check and confirm the employee details before doing the Pay Revision Arrear Reprocessing.

During employee selection step, please avoid those excess drawal cases, for which the second instalment amount not sufficient to adjust the excess drawn amount. If user considers the above said cases along with other employees for reprocessing, system will block such error cases from further processing and will end up with error bill.

Work in Progress

Manual drawn details of Terminal surrender of leave (Arrear):
An option for updating manually drawn details of terminal surrender of leave arrear (DA/Salary), will be facilitated in SPARK for entering the manually drawn terminal surrender leave (Arrear), after taking the terminal ELS. This option will be enabled under the Menu Accounts->Terminal surrender manually drawn ->Terminal Surrender of Leave (Arrear).

New PF & PF Loan Type for High court judges

A new PF type ‘GPF high court judges (CS)’ has included in SPARK for High court judges, corresponding to that a new loan type also added in loan module, ‘GPF-Loan HC Judges (CS)’, this is applicable only for High court judges.

Temporary Employee Search

At present, search facility is not available for retrieving temporary employee details from DDO login. This option will be of great use in offices, where a large number of employees registered as temporary employees, so to search their details will be time laborious and at the same time consuming too, this new search option will help the user to retrieve temporary employee details with in no time. This Temporary Employee search option will be activated under the menu, Accounts->Search Temporary Employee.
Latest Event

SPARK training conducted on 07/06/2018 at IMG

SPARK training was arranged for the employees of Education (Collegiate) Department on 07/06/2018. The training was held at Institute of Management in Government, Thiruvananthapuram, training began at 10.00 am and ended at 1.00 PM, there were 26 members participated in the training. Mr. Sunil T.K., Master Trainer, SPARK handled the training session and SPARK modules were briefly discussed in the training. All the participants actively involved in the session and all the doubts were cleared.

Upcoming Event

As part of the restriction imposed for calling public gathering and conducting meetings in Northern districts of Kerala, in connection with Nipah viral outbreak, SPARK PMU has to postpone the earlier scheduled SPARK monthly trainings in these districts. Considering the employee concerns due to this delay in conducting SPARK trainings and identifying the need of monthly SPARK trainings for the employees, SPARK PMU has decided to venue those delayed trainings at CTFM, Thiruvananthapuram district, the dates of the trainings will be announced very soon.

We are about to take off!
The beta version of new info site is available @ beta.spark.gov.in
Circular No:45/2018/Fin dated 15/05/2018
General Instructions for registering new employees in SPARK using Form No.1 - Erratum - issued.

This circular issued to redress an erratum occurred in the previously issued circular No.39/2018/fin dated 05/05/2018. This corrected version of the circular reminds the importance of new employee registration on the day when the employee joins the duty. This circular mentions Form No.-1 (which is an essential enclosure along with the appointment order based on Rule 13A, Part I KSRs) for new employee registration should be strictly adhered to and PEN must be generated to the Candidate the day itself as and when he joins duty. If the candidate is already having a PEN by virtue of any past service, the same is to be continued. Generating fresh PEN in such cases will attract disciplinary action against the officer who generates the duplicate PEN, ignoring the warning messages in SPARK.

Circular No 57/2018/FIn dated 20/06/2018
Finance Department—Pay Revision arrears—Third installment—Directions to process the same in SPARK—Modified instructions to re process the erroneous first & second installment-Issued.

This circular provides instructions to reprocess the 3rd installment pay revision arrears of excluded cases due to the irregular drawal (excess or short drawal made) in first & second installment Pay revision arrears. This also discusses the provision enabled in SPARK for re-processing the excluded cases, which would readjust the short fall or excess drawal in the first and second installments in third installment of pay revision arrears. This circular alerts that before re-processing, the DDOs should ensure that the SPARK data corrections, if any, required are made completely and further request to modify the same again will not be entertained. A thorough checking of the arrear statement generated from SPARK and circulating the same to the employee concerned, before submitting the bills to treasury, is also to be ensured by the DDOs. without fail.

G.O. (P) No.84/2018/Fin dated 07/06/2018
Payment of Dearness Allowance to State Government Employees and Dearness Relief to State Service Pensioners/Family Pensioner’s- Revised rates effective from 01/07/2017

This GO illustrates the revised rate DA sanctioned for employees/pensioners under various classes. DA enhanced rate details sanctioned for employees under revised, pre revised, pre pre revised scale, employee’s continuing in 1997 scales, and under the categories UGC/AICTE/Medical Education Schemes, judicial officers etc are clearly described in this order, also it is mentioned that the Dearness allowance at the enhanced rate for employees will be paid in cash along with arrears for the period from 01/07/2017 to 31/05/2018 with the salary for the month of June 2018. For pensioners the enhanced rate of Dearness Relief due from 01/07/2017 will be paid along with the pension for July 2018 and arrears from July 2017 to June 2018 will be released in cash along with the pension for July 2018.

Finance Department—SPARK Integration and Bifurcation of head of account 02-Wages - Directions -Issued.

This circular directs all Heads of the Departments and Drawing & Disbursing officers to comply with the instructions in Cir. No. 91/2017/FIN dated 16.12.2017/Head of the department/ DDO should ensure that the Pay & Allowance in respect of part time / contingent / daily waged / casual /contract employees are drawn from the concerned detailed heads under 02-Wages head of account only, and not under 01-salaries) without fail, and requested to move for bifurcation in 02-wages head of account immediately, if not done yet.

Empanelment of Department Master Trainers of SPARK

As per G.O. (P) No. 3/2017/Fin dated 05/01/2017 SPARK PMU invites application for empanelment of Department Master Trainers from Government officials who have expertise in dealing with establishment matters as well as SPARK software operations. Application form is available on the website www.info.spark.gov.in. The filled applications have to be sent to the email id: info@spark.gov.in with DMT Application as subject.
SPARK e-News Letter

A Project under Finance Department, Government of Kerala

Vital Statistics of volume of transactions and the bills processed through SPARK

[Diagram showing volume of transactions]

SPARK processes the salary, arrear, claim bills of all the state government establishments covering 119 Government Departments, and over 33190 offices spread across the state. As per SPARK data records, 89689 salary bills, 70668 arrear bills (including DA arrears, Salary arrears and Pay revision arrears), 1038 other allowances bill and 34541 claim bills were processed through SPARK during the period from 01/05/2018 to 31/05/2018 last month.

Work Report from SPARK PMU

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SPARK PMU’s in-house helpdesk software, QUEST monitors the number of issues handled by SPARK PMU’s help desk unit, this software records the number of queries answered by email, chat and phone by each person at the help desk unit. The number of cases handled by SPARK PMU for the month of May 2018 is shown here.
Get Familiarize with a SPARK Module

Temporary employee Module in SPARK

Temporary employee module in SPARK has been operational since April 2016. Salary and allowances of all temporary staffs (who are not provided with service book), are being processed through this module. The preliminary step is the temporary employee registration process, when an employee joins in an office the concerned DDO/Head of the Dept/Establishment user has to register this temporary employee in SPARK database. A data verification step has been incorporated in the registration page, employee data entered in the registration form is being verified here. As SPARK system has integrated with Aadhaar project, the employee’s Aadhaar number entered through the registration form is being checked with Aadhaar database. System will permit employee registration only if the Aadhaar number concords with the Aadhaar database. On registering the employee, system will generate a temporary employee number (TEN), same concept as that of regular employee’s PEN (Permanent Employee Number). As per latest SPARK DB records, about 171463 temporary employees’ salary and allowances are processed through SPARK.

Temporary Registration

The DDO/Head of the Dept/Establishment can register the employee through Accounts → Register Temporary employee by entering the details such as name, date of birth, address and bank account details. Name, date of birth and Aadhaar number should be same as given in the Aadhaar card. If system shows any error message like “Enter name/dob as in Aadhaar”, then employee should correct the Aadhaar details by contacting nearest Akshaya. Then only, system will allow registering the employee details in SPARK. Also it should be noted that if employee details are saved with incorrect Aadhaar details, system will restrict further correction on employee details with new Aadhaar. In such cases DDO should contact SPARK PMU for correcting Aadhaar details as per new Aadhaar. System strictly restricts the registration of an employee from multiple offices. Once a temporary employee got registered in an office through SPARK system, then without terminating from that office, he/she cannot be registered in other offices.

Processing of Pay and Allowances

The steps followed for processing PAT

Claim processing: Select the claim ‘Pay and Allowance for temporary employees’ through the menu Accounts → Claim Entry

Claim Approval: Accounts → Claim Approval (Select the claim and click on ‘Approve’ button)

Points to be noted:
- Enter Name and Date of Birth as in Aadhaar card.
- Don’t click on ‘Save’ button with incorrect employee details while registering.
Bill making: Accounts → Bills → Make bill from Approved claims
(Pay and allowances of temporary employee bills are generated in contingent (TR 59 C) format.

Bill generation is also facilitated in the option Accounts → Bills → View prepared contingent Claims option

E-submission: Accounts → Bills → E-submit

Bill status of the prepared claims can be viewed through the option Accounts → Bills → View prepared contingent Claims option

**Honorarium Processing : Anganavadi workers in SPARK**

As part of department bifurcation of Social Justice Department, employees details, including Anganavadi workers and helpers attached to Social Justice Department have been transferred to Women and Child Development Department. Pay and allowances of Anganavadi workers and helpers in SPARK are processed on the basis of Central shares, local body shares and state shares, amount allotted from these funds can be drawn based on concerned government order. Currently more than 92912 temporary employees are working under Women and Child Development Department (Social Justice Department), Government of Kerala. As mentioned above, “Get previous month data” option can be used here to update current month details of these employees from the previous month’s data.

**Steps for processing Honorarium**

- Claim processing: Select the claims Honorarium for Central shares, local body shares, state shares in Claim and do claim entries one by one, through the menu Accounts → Claim Entry
- Claim Approval: Select the corresponding claim number of honorarium for Central shares/local body shares/state shares from the displayed claim list in Claim approval page.
- Make bill from Approved claims
- E-submission.

Festival allowance, Festival Advance, Travel allowance and Medical Re-imbursement of temporary employees can be prepared through SPARK. Professional Tax, Income Tax, EFP deduction and other deductions can be recovered through SPARK and this recovered amount will be credited to special TSB of DDO.

**Points to be noted:**

For offices having large number of temporary employees working under their purview, “Get previous month data” option can employed for updating the current pay and allowance details by editing the previous month’s data.

DDO should ensure that temporary bills are prepared and submitted in the corresponding month itself.

**Termination**

SPARK has the provision to terminate the temporary employee from the present office. After the completion of his/her tenure, the DDO can terminate the employee details from the office, through the option; Accounts → Terminate Temporary employee

Once the employee terminated from an office, and again got appointed to the same office or to a different institution, then also DDO has to do the same registration procedures as done before (if appointed in the same office, the verification step can be exempted).