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Newsflash: CBDT issues clarifications on revised ICDS

- Circular No. 10/2017 dated 23 March 2017

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Background

- Section 145(1) of the Income-tax Act, 1961 ('the Act') provides that the income chargeable under the head "Profits and gains of business or profession" or "Income from other sources" shall, subject to the provisions of sub-section (2), be computed in accordance with either cash or mercantile system of accounting regularly employed by the assessee. Section 145(2) of the Act conferred powers to the Central Government to notify Income Computation and Disclosure Standards ('ICDS') for any class of assessee or for any class of income. In this regard, the Central Government had notified 10 Income Computation and Disclosure Standards ('ICDS') vide Notification No. 32 of 2015 dated 31 March 2015.
- The notified ICDS were applicable to all assessee following mercantile system of accounting for computation of income chargeable under the head 'profits and gains from business or profession' and 'income from other sources' from AY 2016-17 onwards
- Subsequent to notification of the ICDS, owing to various implementation issues, a number of representations were received which were examined by an Expert Committee. In response to the same, the Committee recommended a two-fold approach for the smooth implementation of ICDS viz. amendment to the provisions of ICDS in respect of certain issues and issuance of clarifications by way of FAQs for the rest of issues.
- Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance deferred the applicability of ICDS by one year (Press Release dated 6 July 2016) for considering the recommendations of Expert Committee and making suitable changes to tax audit forms. As such, the ICDS is now applicable from AY 2017-18 onwards.
- The CBDT, further, through its Notification no. 86/2016 rescinded the ICDS issued vide notification no. 32 /2015 on 29 September 2016 and issued revised ICDS (after making certain significant changes) vide [Notification no. 87/2016](#), also making suitable changes to tax audit forms vide [Notification no. 88/2016](#).

Clarifications Issued by CBDT

In furtherance to the revised ICDS notified, on the recommendations of the expert committee, the CBDT issued certain clarifications as under:

- Q1** Preamble of ICDS-I states that this ICDS is applicable for computation of income chargeable under the head "Profits and gains of business or profession" or "Income from other sources" and not for the purposes of maintenance of books of accounts. However, Para 1 of ICDS I states that it deals with significant accounting policies. Accounting policies are applied for maintenance of books of accounts and preparing financial statements. What is the interplay between ICDS-I and maintenance of books of accounts?
- A1** As stated in the Preamble, ICDS is not meant for maintenance of books of accounts or preparing financial statements. Persons are required to maintain books of accounts and prepare financial statements as per accounting policies applicable to them. For example, companies are required to maintain books of account and prepare financial statements as per requirements of Companies Act 2013. The accounting policies mentioned in ICDS-I being fundamental in nature shall be applicable for computing income under the heads "Profits and gains of business or profession" or "Income from other sources".

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- Q2** Certain ICDS provisions are inconsistent with judicial precedents. Whether these judicial precedents would prevail over ICDS?
- A2** The ICDS have been notified after due deliberation and after examining judicial views for bringing certainty on the issues covered by it. Certain judicial pronouncements were pronounced in the absence of authoritative guidance on these issues under the Act for computing Income under the head "Profits and gains of business or profession" or Income from other sources. Since certainty is now provided by notifying ICDS under section 145(2), the provisions of ICDS shall be applicable to the transactional issues dealt therein in relation to assessment year 2017-18 and subsequent assessment years.
- Q3** Does ICDS apply to non-corporate taxpayers who are not required to maintain books of account and/or those who are covered by presumptive scheme of taxation like sections 44AD, 44AE, 44ADA, 44B, 44BB, 44BBA, etc. of the Act?
- A3** ICDS is applicable to specified persons having income chargeable under the head 'Profits and gains of business or profession' or 'Income from other sources'. Therefore, the relevant provisions of ICDS shall also apply to the persons computing income under the relevant presumptive taxation scheme. For example, for computing presumptive income of a partnership firm under section 44AD of the Act, the provisions of ICDS on Construction Contract or Revenue recognition shall apply for determining the receipts or turnover, as the case may be.
- Q4** If there is conflict between ICDS and other specific provisions of the Income-tax rules, 1962 ('the Rules') governing taxation of income like rules 9A, 9B etc. of the Rules, which provisions shall prevail?
- A4** ICDS provides general principles for computation of income. In case of conflict, if any, between the provisions of Rules and ICDS, the provisions of Rules, which deal with specific circumstances, shall prevail.
- Q5** ICDS is framed on the basis of accounting standards notified by Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) vide Notification No. GSR 739(E) dated 7 December 2006 under section 211(3C) of erstwhile Companies Act 1956. However, MCA has notified in February 2015 a new set of standards called 'Indian Accounting Standards' (Ind-AS). How will ICDS apply to companies which adopted Ind-AS?
- A5** ICDS shall apply for computation of taxable income under the head "Profit and gains of business or profession" or "Income from other sources" under the Income Tax Act. This is irrespective of the accounting standards adopted by companies i.e. either Accounting Standards or Ind-AS.
- Q6** Whether ICDS shall apply to computation of Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) under section 115JB of the Act or Alternate Minimum Tax (AMT) under section 115JC of the Act?
- A6** MAT under section 115JB of the Act is computed on 'book profit' that is net profit as shown in the Profit and Loss Account prepared under the Companies Act subject to certain specified adjustments. Since, the provisions of ICDS are applicable for computation of income under the regular provisions of the Act, the provisions of ICDS shall not apply for computation of MAT.
AMT under section 115JC of the Act is computed on adjusted total income which is derived by making specified adjustments to total income computed as per the regular provisions of the Act. Hence, the provisions of ICDS shall apply for computation of AMT.
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- Q7** Whether the provisions of ICDS shall apply to Banks, Non-banking financial institutions, Insurance companies, Power sector, etc.?
- A7** The general provisions of ICDS shall apply to all persons unless there are sector specific provisions contained in the ICDS or the Act. For example, ICDS VIII contains specific provisions for banks and certain financial institutions and Schedule I of the Act contains specific provisions for Insurance business.
- Q8** Para 4(ii) of ICDS-I provides that Market to Market (MTM) loss or an expected loss shall not be recognized unless the recognition is in accordance with the provisions of any other ICDS. Whether similar consideration applies to recognition of MTM gain or expected incomes?
- A8** Same principle as contained in ICDS-I relating to MTM losses or an expected loss shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to MTM gains or an expected profit.
- Q9** ICDS-I provides that an accounting policy shall not be changed without 'reasonable cause'. The term 'reasonable cause' is not defined. What shall constitute 'reasonable cause'?
- A9** Under the Act, 'reasonable cause' is an existing concept and has evolved well over a period of time conferring desired flexibility to the tax payer in deserving cases.
- Q10** Which ICDS would govern derivative instruments?
- A10** ICDS -VI (subject to para 3 of ICDS-VIII) provides guidance on accounting for derivative contracts such as forward contracts and other similar contracts. For derivatives, not within the scope of ICDS-VI, provisions of ICDS-I would apply.
- Q11** Whether the recognition of retention money, receipt of which is contingent on the satisfaction of certain performance criterion is to be recognized as revenue on billing?
- A11** Retention money, being part of overall contract revenue, shall be recognised as revenue subject to reasonable certainty of its ultimate collection condition contained in para 9 of ICDS-III on Construction contracts.
- Q12** Since there is no specific scope exclusion for real estate developers and Build -Operate- Transfer (BOT) projects from ICDS IV on Revenue Recognition, please clarify whether ICDS-III and ICDS-IV should be applied by real estate developers and BOT operators. Also, whether ICDS is applicable for leases.
- A12** At present there is no specific ICDS notified for real estate developers, BOT projects and leases. Therefore, relevant provisions of the Act and ICDS shall apply to these transactions as may be applicable.
- Q13** The condition of reasonable certainty of ultimate collection is not laid down for taxation of interest, royalty and dividend. Whether the taxpayer is obliged to account for such income even when the collection thereof is uncertain?
- A13** As a principle, interest accrues on time basis and royalty accrues on the basis of contractual terms. Subsequent non recovery in either cases can be claimed as deduction in view of amendment to S.36(1)(vii). Further, the provision of the Act (e.g. Section 43D) shall prevail over the provisions of ICDS.

- Q14** Whether ICDS is applicable to revenues which are liable to tax on gross basis like interest, royalty and fees for technical services for non-residents u/s. 115A of the Act?
- A14** Yes, the provisions of ICDS, shall also apply for computation of these incomes on gross basis for arriving at the amount chargeable to tax.
- Q15** Para 8 of ICDS-V states expenditure incurred on commissioning of project, including expenditure incurred on test runs and experimental production shall be capitalized. It also states that expenditure incurred after the plant has begun commercial production i.e., production intended for sale or captive consumption shall be treated as revenue expenditure. What shall be the treatment of expense incurred after the conduct of test runs and experimental production but before commencement of commercial production?
- A15** As clarified in Para 8 of ICDS- V, the expenditure incurred till the plant has begun commercial production, that is, production intended for sale or captive consumption, shall be treated as capital expenditure.
- Q16** What is the taxability of opening balance as on 1st day of April 2016 of Foreign Currency Translation Reserve (FCTR) relating to non-integral foreign operation, if any, recognised as per Accounting Standards (AS) II?
- A16** FCTR balance as on 1 April 2016 pertaining to exchange differences on monetary items for non-integral operations, shall be recognised in the previous year relevant for assessment year 2017-18 to the extent not recognised in the income computation in the past.
- Q17** For subsidy received prior to 1st day of April 2016 but not recognised in the books pending satisfaction of related conditions and achieving reasonable certainty of receipt, how shall the same be recognised under ICDS on or after 1st day of April 2016?
- A17** Para 4 of ICDS- VII read with Para 5 to Para 9 of ICDS- VII provides for timing of recognition of government grant. The transitional provision in Para 13 of ICDS-VII provides that a government grant which meets the recognition criteria on or after 1st day of April 2016 shall be recognised in accordance with ICDS- VII. All government grants actually received prior to 1st day of April 2016 shall be deemed to have been recognised on its receipt in accordance with Para 4(2) of ICDS-VII and accordingly will be outside the transitional provision and therefore the government grants received on or after 1st day of April 2016 and for which recognition criteria provided in Para 5 to Para 9 of ICDS-VII is also satisfied thereafter, the same shall be recognised as per the provisions of ICDS- VII. The grants received prior to 1st day of April 2016 shall continue to be recognised as per the law prevailing prior to that date.

E.g. if out of total subsidy entitlement of 10 Crore an amount of 6 Crore is recognised in the books of accounts till 31st day of March 2016 and recognition of balance 4 Crore is deferred pending satisfaction of related conditions and/or achieving reasonable certainty of receipt. The balance amount of 4 Crore will be taxed in the year in which related conditions are met and reasonable certainty is achieved. If these conditions are met over two years, the amount of 4 Crore shall be taxed over the period of two years. The amount of 6 Crore for which recognition criteria were met prior to 1st day of April 2016 shall not be taxable post 1st day of April 2016.

But if the subsidy is already received prior to 1st day of April 2016, Para 13 of ICDS-VII shall not apply even if some of the related conditions are met on or after 1 April 2016. This is in view of Para 4(2) of ICDS- VII which provides that Government grant shall not be postponed beyond the date of actual receipt. Such grants shall continue to be governed by the provisions of law applicable prior to 1st day of April 2016.

- Q18** If the taxpayer sells a security on the 30th day of April 2017. The interest payment dates are December and June. The actual date of receipt of interest is on the 30th day of June 2017 but the interest on accrual basis has been accounted as income on the 31st day of March .2017. Whether the taxpayer shall be permitted to claim deduction of such interest i.e. offered to tax but not received while computing the capital gain?
- A18** Yes, the amount already taxed as interest income on accrual basis shall be taken into account for computation of income arising from such sale.
- Q19** Para 9 of ICDS-VIII on securities requires securities held as stock-in-trade shall be valued at actual cost initially recognised or net realisable value (NRV) at the end of that previous year, whichever is lower. Para 10 of Part-A of ICDS-VIII requires the said exercise to be carried out category wise. How the same shall be computed?
- A19** For subsequent measurement of securities held as stock-in-trade, the securities are first aggregated category wise. The aggregate cost and NRV of each category of security are compared and the lower of the two is to be taken as carrying value as per ICDS- VIII. This is illustrated below

Security	Category	Cost	NRV	Lower of cost or NRV	ICDS Value
A	Share	100	75	75	
B	Share	120	150	120	
C	Share	140	120	120	
D	Share	200	190	190	
	Total	560	535	505	535
E	Debt Security	150	160	150	
F	Debt Security	105	90	90	
G	Debt Security	125	135	125	
H	Debt Security	220	230	220	
	Total	600	615	585	600
Securities Total		1160	1150	1090	1135

- Q20** There are specific provisions in the Act read with Rules under which a portion of borrowing cost may get disallowed under sections like 14A, 43B, 40(a)(i), 40(a)(ia), 40A(2)(b), etc. of the Act. Whether borrowing costs to be capitalized under ICDS-IX should exclude portion of borrowing costs which gets disallowed under such specific provisions?
- A20** Since specific provisions of the Act override the provisions of ICDS, it is clarified that borrowing costs to be considered for capitalization under ICDS IX shall exclude those borrowing costs which are disallowed under specific provisions of the Act. Capitalization of borrowing cost shall apply for that portion of the borrowing cost which is otherwise allowable as deduction under the Act.
- Q21** Whether bill discounting charges and other similar charges would fall under the definition of borrowing cost?
- A21** The definition of borrowing cost is an inclusive definition. Bill discounting charges and other similar charges are covered as borrowing cost.
- Q22** How to allocate borrowing costs relating to general borrowing as computed in accordance with formula provided under Para 6 of ICDS-IX to different qualifying assets?
- A22** The capitalization of general borrowing cost under ICDS-IX shall be done on asset- by-asset basis.
- Q23** What is the impact of Para 20 of ICDS X containing transitional provisions?
- A23** Para 20 of ICDS - X provides that all the provisions or assets and related income shall be recognised for the previous year commencing on or after 1st day of April 2016 in accordance with the provisions of this standard after taking into account the amount recognised, if any, for the same for any previous year ending on or before 31st day of March, 2016.

The intent of transitional provision is that there is neither 'double taxation' of income due to application of ICDS nor there should be escape of any income due to application of ICDS from a particular date. This is explained as under

Provision required as per ICDS on 31 March 2017 for items brought forward from 31st day of March 2016 ... (A)	INR 3 Crores
Provisions as per ICDS for FY 2016-17 ... (B)	INR 5 Crores
Total gross provision ...(C) = (A)+(B)	INR 8 Crores
Less: Provision already recognised for computation of taxable income in FY 2016-17 or earlier ... (D)	INR 2 Crores
Net provisions as per ICDS in FY 2016-17 to be recognised as per transition provision... (E)= (C) – (D)	INR 6 Crores



- Q24** Expenditure on most post-retirement benefits like provident fund, gratuity, etc. are covered by specific provisions. There are other post-retirement benefits offered by companies like medical benefits. Such benefits are covered by AS-15 for which no parallel ICDS has been notified. Whether provision for these liabilities are excluded from scope of ICDS X?
- A24** It is clarified that provisioning for employee benefit which are otherwise covered by AS 15 shall continue to be governed by specific provisions of the Act and are not dealt with by ICDS-X.
- Q25** ICDS-I requires disclosure of significant accounting policies and other ICDS requires specific disclosures. Where is the taxpayer required to make such disclosures specified in ICDS?
- A25** Net effect on the income due to application of ICDS is to be disclosed in the Return of income. The disclosures required under ICDS shall be made in the tax audit report in Form 3CD. However, there shall not be any separate disclosure requirements for persons who are not liable to tax audit.

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For further information please contact:

RSM Astute Consulting Pvt. Ltd.

13th Floor, Bakhtawar, 229, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.

T: (91-22) 6108 5555 / 6121 4444

F: (91-22) 6108 5556 / 2287 5771

E: emails@rsmindia.in

W: www.rsmindia.in

Offices: Mumbai, New Delhi - NCR, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Surat, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Pune, Gandhidham and Jaipur.



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This newsflash is general in nature. In this newsflash, we have summarized CBDT Circular no. 10 of 2017 dated 23 March 2017 clarifying certain issues relating to the implementation of the ICDS by way of FAQs. It may be noted that nothing contained in this newsflash should be regarded as our opinion and facts of each case will need to be analyzed to ascertain applicability or otherwise of the said notification and appropriate professional advice should be sought for applicability of legal provisions based on specific facts. We are not responsible for any liability arising from any statements or errors contained in this newsflash.

24 March 2017