

## **The role of DESIDOC in science communication**

*A. LAKSHMANA MOORTHY\**

Information is a vital resource for research and development. Scientists need information on the work being done or already done elsewhere to avoid repetition and to corroborate their work. Such information made available at the right time, in the right form would result in more efficient and fruitful R&D programmes.

Realising this, the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), soon after its formation, created a Scientific Information Bureau (SIB) in 1958 to cater to the information needs of the Organisation. In 1967, SIB was reorganised and became Defence Scientific Information & Documentation Centre (DESIDOC) with wider scope and responsibilities. In 1970 DESIDOC was accorded the status of a self-accounting DRDO establishment.

Today, DESIDOC is the central information agency for collection, processing and dissemination of scientific and technical information of interest to DRDO laboratories and establishments and other agencies of the Ministry of Defence. DESIDOC has developed a database and an information system for Defence S&T and also coordinates the library and information activities of DRDO.

### **LIBRARY SERVICES**

The Defence Science Library (DSL) at DESIDOC is one of the biggest technical libraries in Delhi and probably has the largest collection of documents in the fields of defence science and technology.

The DSL maintains a special collection of old and classic defence books on one hand and up-to-date reference sources on the other.

The Library facilitates free access to information to its readers and uses photocopiers, microfilm reader-cum-printers, CD-ROM systems and online searching facilities for providing information as well as documents. It has a collection of about 53,000 books; 34,000 technical reports; 17,800 standard specifications; 20,000 reprints, and 8,000 other micro-documents along with a complete collection of US Military Standards in microform. It presently receives about 410 periodicals. In addition, about 70 periodicals are received gratis and on exchange basis. The Library subscribes to several international abstracting and indexing periodicals.

The technical reports collection comprises reports of various important organisations like NTIS, NASA RAND, DRIC. The standards and specifications collection includes those issued by BIS, ASTM, Ministry of Defence, UK and Directorate of Standardisation, Ministry of Defence, India. The Library has also a good collection of American, British, German, and Russian patents.

---

\* Scientist-in-Charge, Publication Division, Defence Scientific Information and Documentation Centre, Metcalfe House, Delhi-110 054

The DSL uses CD-ROM databases also for providing information to its users. It has subscribed to CD-ROM databases like the NTIS Database, the Applied Science & Technology Index, LISA, Whitaker's Bookbank, Grolier Electronic Encyclopedia, INSPEC Database, Ulrich's Plus, Books in Print Plus, and Aldrichem Data Search.

DESIDOC provides information to DRDO scientists and technologists both on request and in anticipation of demand. For this, DESIDOC information specialists scan relevant literature available in the library and also conduct CD-ROM and online searches of foreign databases as and when necessary. Foreign databases are searched through the DIALOG Information Services.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Dissemination of Information covering the current developments in defence science and technology forms and important components of the activities of DESIDOC. To this end, DESIDOC brings out a few periodicals and some *ad hoc* publications. The Centre also acts as the publication wing of DRDO and brings out the following publications of the Organisation.

### **Defence Science Journal (DSJ)**

This quarterly journal contains original research papers, review papers and short communications in various disciplines of science having a bearing on Defence. Special issues are brought out from time to time to provide state-of-the-art information. Eminent scientists in the respective fields are associated with these issues as Guest Editors.

DSJ is covered in major international and national abstracting and indexing periodicals.

### **Popular Science & Technology Series (PST)**

This series is aimed at popularising the applications of science and technology to defence, among the defence personnel, students and the general public. Each issue, written by a subject specialist in a simple, lucid style, gives comprehensive information on a topic of current interest.

### **DRDO Newsletter**

This bi-monthly house-bulletin of DRDO highlights the major achievements, policies, future plans and other scientific, administrative and cultural activities of the Organisation. The information reported in the Newsletter helps in projecting the image and achievements of the Organisation to the outside world and also in bringing together the members of the DRDO family.

### **DRDO Samachar**

This is the Hindi version of the news items published in DRDO Newsletter and issued quarterly.

### **R&D Digest**

This bi-monthly publication highlights important national and international scientific and technical developments of defence interest. It has a restricted circulation.

### **DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology**

This is a bi-monthly publication containing information on new products, new technologies, and

other current R&D developments in information science and technology, called out from current journals received in the DSL. The Bulletin also covers the activities of DESIDOC, highlighting the services rendered by DESIDOC to its users.

### **Other Publications**

Apart from these regular publications, DESIDOC also brings out a few ad hoc publications for reference purposes. Some of these are periodically updated and revised. Besides, DESIDOC extends editorial and printing support to other DRDO laboratories on request.

DESIDOC is committed to providing information access to researchers as well as bonafide science writers interested in taking science to common man.