assistance to the beneficiaries often lead to deposit the funds in various accounts. Release of funds to the implementing agencies without ascertaining the utilisation of funds released to them earlier leads to accumulation of unspent balances and increase in the deposit in various accounts. Identification of viable schemes as per the developmental needs of SCs and identification of eligible beneficiaries to be considered for assistance in a financial year should be completed well before the commencement of the financial year. Sanction of schemes and release of assistance can thus be ensured in time soon after the receipt of SCA funds. This will help in avoiding last minute sanction of schemes at the fag end of the financial year and in ensuring the full utilisation of funds.

6. The Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment will intimate the tentative allocation of SCA to State Governments/UT Administration at the beginning of the financial year and will release the first instalment of SCA on the basis of SC population and relative backwardness of States/UTs during the first quarter of the financial year. The State Governments/ UT Administrations should furnish the information on effort based criteria {the criteria at (c) and (d) mentioned in para 3(i)} and the utilisation of SCA released to them during the previous year and first instalment released during the current year, in the month of August every year. This will ensure the release of second instalment in the beginning of the second half of the financial year.

7. Utilisation of 15% and 5% of total SCA released to the State Governments/UT Administrations exclusively for the economic development schemes/programmes for SC women and disabled persons among SCs respectively may be ensured from this year (1998-99) onwards. The progress on utilisation of SCA for SC Women and disabled among SCs indicating the schemes implemented, funds utilised and the number of beneficiaries covered, may be furnished to this Ministry within a month after the end of this financial