

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE 1958-59

FIFTIETH REPORT
(SECOND LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

Action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Estimates Committee contained in their Thirtieth Report (First Lok Sabha) on statistical studies of certain Railway problems



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
March, 1959/Chaitra 1881 (Saka)

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‡Elected w.e.f. 23-9-1958 vice Shri Nemi Chandra Kasliwal resigned.

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INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee, having been authorized by the Committee, present this Fiftieth Report of the Estimates Committee of the Lok Sabha on action taken by Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Thirtieth Report of the Estimates Committee of the First Lok Sabha.

2. The Thirtieth Report of the Estimates Committee was presented to the House on the 26th May, 1956. The Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the Observations/Recommendations in this Report between the 19th November, 1956 and the 12th July, 1957. The replies of Government were examined by the Study Group of the Estimates Committee on the 23rd December, 1958, after completing the examination of the replies in respect of recommendations made in the earlier Reports on Railways.

3. The Report has been divided into two chapters, *i.e.*,

- (i) Report
- (ii) Replies of Government.

NEW DELHI-1;

March 28, 1959.

Chaitra 7, 1881 (Saka).

BALVANTRAY G. MEHTA,

*Chairman,
Estimates Committee.*

I REPORT

The Estimates Committee, in their 30th Report of the Ministry of Railways made certain observations on the basis of studies carried out mainly in respect of the following three problems of Railways:—

- (i) Consumption of Coal on the Railways,
- (ii) Number and cost of staff employed on the Railways, and
- (iii) Utilisation of wagon stock and locomotives.

The comments of the Ministry on these observations are given in Chapter II.

The coal consumption figures for the last four years are as under:—

| | (lbs of coal consumed per 1,000 Gross Ton miles) | | | |
|---------|--|-------|-----------|-------|
| | B.G. | | M.G. | |
| | Passenger | Goods | Passenger | Goods |
| 1954-55 | . | 184.7 | 161.1 | 221.3 |
| 1955-56 | . | 182.0 | 153.8 | 221.0 |
| 1956-57 | . | 185.2 | 152.4 | 218.6 |
| 1957-58 | . | 184.5 | 149.5 | 214.0 |
| | | | | 174.6 |

These figures indicate a trend towards improvement though they are still considerably in excess of the figures for the pre-war years. From the budget speech of the Railway Minister dated 18th February, 1959, it is noticed that the Expert Committee on Coal have indicated scope for reducing coal consumption and expenditure—mainly by improving the quality of coal and by strict control on pilferage, losses and wastages. *The Committee, therefore, suggest that sustained efforts should continue to be made to gradually improve the performance on a programme basis so as to reduce the rate of coal consumption to the pre-war level. These efforts should include measures to restore some of the favourable factors that were operating during the pre-war period, as referred to in the replies of the Ministry to the Committee's recommendations/conclusions contained in Chapter II of this Report.*

As for the observations regarding number and cost of staff employed on the Railways, *the Committee are of the view that the question of correlating the number of staff employed with the units of services performed might be tackled on sample basis by the Statistical Organisation attached to the Railway Board.*

With regard to the operating statistics referred to in paras 45-57 of their 30th Report (First Lok Sabha) *the Committee specially note that the speeds of goods trains both on B.G. and M.G. systems have been continuously on the*

decline since the year 1950-51 as will be seen from the figures given in the table below —

| Year | | | | | | | | B.G. | M.G. |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------|--------|
| | | | | | | | | M.P.H. | M.P.H. |
| 1950-51 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 10·8 | 9·32 |
| 1951-52 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 10·7 | 9·22 |
| 1952-53 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 10·4 | 9·14 |
| 1953-54 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 10·2 | 8·93 |
| 1954-55 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 10·1 | 8·72 |
| 1955-56 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 9·84 | 8·41 |
| 1956-57 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 9·60 | 8·27 |
| 1957-58 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 9·28 | 8·23 |

This aspect of operation, therefore, needs continuous high level attention of the Railways with a view to arrest this downward trend.

REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT

II

| S. No. | Reference (is in Appendix I to the 30th Re- port) | Summary of Recommendations/Conclusions | Government's replies |
|--------|--|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 13 | The Committee observe from the percentage increase of coal consumed (lbs. per 1000 G.T.M.) on the various services in 1953-54 and 1954-55 over the consumption in 1938-39 that the Metre gauge services have deteriorated much more than the Broad gauge services. | The main reason for greater deterioration in the performance of M.G. services is that smaller boilers of M.G. locomotives are more sensitive to variations in the quality of coal and firing technique. Although some endeavour has been made during the last 6 to 8 years to improve these features, improvement in performance for this reason has been comparatively of a lesser degree in case of M.G. services. |

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- 2 14-15 The Committee have worked out the quantity of coal that would have been saved in 1953-54 and 1954-55 had the efficiency of coal consumption been maintained at best performances in the preceding years since 1938-39 and the monetary savings that would have been effected thereby at the level of prices in these two years. They have noticed that the deterioration in coal consumption has resulted in about 14 lakh tons more of coal valued at about four crores of rupees being consumed during each of the years 1953-54 and 1954-55.

The other factor that has somewhat militated again; improvement in M.G. performances is relatively lower working pressure of the boiler (140 to 160 lbs. for the M.G. against 180 lbs. for the B.G.) on majority of M.G. locomotives. Moreover, the locomotives of longer age have continued to be proportionately in greater number on the M.G. than on the B.G. system.
[Min. of Rlys. O.M. No. '6-B(c)-6000/Recommendation (30), dated 19-11-1956.]

- 4
- The main factors responsible for good performance of locomotives during the pre-war period were :—

- (a) Supply of coal from the smaller number of collieries under contract system which ensured quality in supplies, enabled the engine crew to achieve proper control over firing conditions and the locomotives to be properly drafted for efficient combustion with a few qualities of coals.
- (b) Higher standards of skill and ability in the maintenance and running staff, and adequate supply of spare parts which ensured satisfactory locomotive operation and maintenance.

These two factors were adversely affected during the war period and particularly after Partition resulting in considerable deterioration in the performance of locomotives, and consequently increased consumption of coal. The adverse effect of the deterioration in grade and of the lack of consistency in the physical and combustion characteristics of coals on the fuel bill is very marked. In the older types of locomotives consumption with Grade II coal is about 40% higher than that with selected A grade coal whereas reduction in the price of grade II coal as against selected A grade is only 13·8%. Even when non-caking coals replace caking coals the consumption of grade for grade increases by about 15% although there is no difference in the prices of the two types of coals.

The recommendations made by the Railway Fuel Economy Enquiry Committee to improve railway coal supplies and also the standards of maintenance and running staff (including maintenance facilities) are now being implemented. But even when these two factors are brought to the pre-war level, the reduction in coal consumption over the pre-war figures is not expected to exceed 10 to 12% against the fuel savings of 20% estimated by the Railway Fuel Economy Enquiry Committee. This is because the transport development under the 2nd five year plan will call for higher running speed on goods

and passenger trains, substantial increase in the proportion of light passenger and pick up goods services, and also, on greater use of over-age locomotives to meet locomotive power requirements. Moreover the 2nd Five Year Plan provides for change over from caking to non-caking coals and this will reduce the performance efficiency of the earlier types of locomotives which have so far been using caking coals.

[Min. of Rlys. O. M. No. 56-B(C)-6000/Recommendations (30), dated 19-11-1956.]

On the basis of the assessment made by the Fuel Economy Enquiry Committee that the scope for economy in the Railways on fuel that could be achieved by the various measures recommended by them would be about 20%, the excess expenditure in the two years would work out to about 6 crores. The break-up of this under the three categories of the economy measures referred to by them would be as follows:—

1. Measures beyond the control of the Railway Ministry. 2.2 crores
2. Long-term measures to be introduced by the Rly. Board. 1.9 crores
3. Measures that could have been introduced in two or three years. 1.9 crores

The Committee feel that since the Fuel Economy Enquiry Committee report was represented as early as in March 1953, even if the third category of these measures has been instituted immediately thereafter, full results could not, perhaps have been expected in 1953-54, but some economy could have been effected in 1954-55.

The Committee, therefore consider that a substantial portion of the amount of rupees 1·9 crores could have been saved in 1954-55, had vigorous steps been taken to institute the measures advocated by the Fuel Economy Enquiry Committee.

- (c) Railways have been asked to tighten up trip rations on train services by carrying out intensive trip rationing trials on locomotives, where necessary.
- (d) For a proper analysis of the different factors affecting coal consumption statistical procedure is being developed to obtain a breakdown of coal consumption in the following four conditions of service:—

- (i) Shed working.
- (ii) Light engine working.
- (iii) Incidental working.
- (iv) Actual train working.

This breakdown will show up excessive engine hours in steam and indicate the measures to be adopted to reduce them. A shed working form has already been drawn up and circulated to Railways with a view to exercising control over shed working conditions.

- (e) Active endeavours are being made to intensify traffic with the existing locomotives and vehicles. These endeavours involve the adoption of the measures suggested by the Railway Fuel Economy Enquiry Committee to effect economy in the utilisation of locomotive power.

Regarding the scope for fuel economy it may be pointed out that the overall saving of 20% in coal consumption estimated by the Railway Fuel Economy Enquiry Committee was based on the pre-war performances of the year 1936-39 and will not now apply to the intensified traffic of the second five-year plan, requiring higher speeds of both goods and passenger trains, change over from caking to non-caking coals and increase in the proportion of:

- (a) Light passenger services.
- (b) Pick up goods services.
- (c) Heavy goods locomotives.
- (d) Overage locomotives in order to maintain power position.

In the circumstances, maximum fuel saving is not expected to exceed 10 to 12% even if all the fuel economy measures are adopted. Supply conditions are rationalised and there is no further deterioration in the quality of coal used in locomotives.

[Mins. of Rlys. OM No. 56-B(c)6000/Recommendations (30), dated 19-11-1956.]

The Committee would like to mention specially one aspect of coal consumption in 1954-55 A large number of factors enter into the performance figure of lbs. per 100 gross ton

which is, that while the other three services namely Goods and Proportion of Mixed BG., Passenger and Proportion of Mixed MG., and Goods and Proportion of Mixed MG., have shown better results in that year compared to the previous year, on the Passenger and Proportion of Mixed BG., there has been a deterioration of about 2.1 lbs. per 100 gross tons miles compared to 1953-54. Since all the other three services have shown considerable improvement, it would be difficult to explain this fall in performance on the BG. Passenger services as being due to quality of coal etc. The Committee are, therefore, of opinion that at least 2.1 lbs. of coal per 1000 gross ton miles (or about 29280 tons of coal in all) could easily have been saved in that year on this service alone by the operational efficiency being maintained at previous year's level in which case the savings to the Railways would have been of the order of about 10 lakhs of rupees.

miles for the passenger and proportion of mixed services. Some of these factors are:—

- (a) Train loads.
- (b) Train speeds.
- (c) Relative proportions of the total ton miles for the suburban, slow passenger, fast passenger, and light-high speed services.
- (d) Relative proportions of caking and non-caking coals used in BESA and other types of locomotives.
- (e) Relative proportions of over-age and earlier types of locomotives in use.
- (f) Use of goods locomotives on passenger services.
- (g) Errors in compilation of figures (within reasonable limits.)

Some variations in the above factors are a normal feature on Railways and the fluctuation of the order of 3 lbs. per 1000 gross ton miles should not be taken to indicate that the performances have deteriorated or improved. It is indeed the general trend in the performance taken over a period of two to three years or more that should indicate a trend towards improvement or deterioration.

From the coal consumption figure for the B.G. passenger and proportion of mixed services taken over the period 1950-51 to 1954-55, it will be seen that there is a definite trend for reduction in coal consumption.

Mins. of Rlys. OM No. 56-B (c)-6000/Rcom-mendations (30), dated 19-11-1956.]

19 The Committee have noticed that the Railway Board publish in Appendix C of Volume II of the Report on Indian Railways, statistics of the total number and cost of staff as also the number of staff, department-wise, and that all these figures are published separately for each of the Railways under a number of categories. They have further noticed that for the purpose of comparison the average wages per employee have been worked out and shown in this appendix but other figures have been shown without any comparison having been made between Railways on the basis of any unit of service such as number of cost per train mile, track mile etc.

The Board have given careful consideration to the question of correlating the number of staff employed in various Branches of Zonal Railways with the units of service performed by them and have come to the view that :—

- (a) the labour and time required to undertake such correlation would be considerable and the results would be hardly commensurate in value, and
 - (b) for purposes of managerial control the information is not likely to be of much value.
- For these reasons the Board consider that the study recommended need not be undertaken.
- [*Min. of Rlys. O.M. No. 56-B(c)-6000/Recommendation (30), dated 23-1-1957.*]

employed or the wages paid on any of the Railways are in excess of the requirements. No such review or analysis of the figures appears to have been undertaken by the Railway Board so far.

- 6 20-21 The Committee have analysed the number and cost of staff employed on Railways under some of the categories in terms of wages paid per employee and the number and cost per 1000 train miles and have compared the figures for 1953-54 with the last two years. The total number of staff employed on various Railways, department-wise, on 31st March, 1954 has also been analysed with reference to service units, such as, track miles, train miles, engine miles etc. A brief analysis of the figures is given in paras 22 to 43 of the Report.
- Please see remarks against item 5 of the 30th Report of the Estimates Committee.
[Min. of Rlys. O.M. No. 56-B(c)-6000/Recommendation (30), dated 23-1-1957]
- The Committee hope that a similar examination will be undertaken by the Railway Board in regard to these statistics for 1954-55 and continued regularly thereafter as otherwise the utility of these statistics for control measures is very little.
- 7 45-57 The Committee have studied the various statistics with a view to see as to how efficiently the Railways have utilised their wagon capacity for the transport of goods and would observe as follows:—
- The observations of the Committee have been noted by the Railway Administrations concerned, who are taking all possible steps to improve the operational efficiency in the light of the remarks contained in paragraphs 45 to 57 of

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1. Traffic Density.

As far as broad gauge as a whole is concerned, there has been a steady increase in Traffic Density since 1938-39. It has however, been accepted by the Efficiency Bureau that the increase in Traffic Density does not fully explain the fall in operational performances as reflected in speeds of goods trains, and that there has been a certain deterioration in operational efficiency.

As regards metre gauge, the overall traffic density shows no increase since 1938-39 and from an examination of the figures since that year it has to be concluded that generally the areas served in the country by the metre gauge have not had the proportionate increase in the traffic than the areas served by the B.G.;

2. Percentage of wagons Under or Awaiting Repairs.

This has been discussed in the Seventeenth Report of the Committee, where the extent of deterioration and the measures to be taken for improvement have been stated.

3. Percentage of Average Wagon Load to Average Wagon Capacity.

While there has been no deterioration in the utilisation of wagon loading capacity, that about no deterioration in the utilisation of wagon

the Committee's report, with particular reference to the intensive utilisation of the available wagon capacity.

The following comments are, however, offered in answer to certain specific observations made on the general operational efficiency;

(a) Percentage of average wagon load to average wagon capacity.

30 per cent and 45 per cent of the wagon space of B.G. and M.G. respectively should go unutilised indicates that there is great scope for improvement.

4. Average No. of Loaded Wagons in a Train.

There is great scope for improvement in the number of loaded wagons by improved commercial working and it should be possible to achieve the figure of 72.9 achieved on the broad gauge during the war years.

On the M.G. the figure for 1953-54 (78.2) was the highest ever exceeding even performance of war years but there has been a drop in 1954-55.

5. Average speed of Goods Trains.

There has been considerable deterioration in the speed of goods trains. The Efficiency Bureau have come to the conclusion that inefficiency is a contributing factor to this deterioration, and that the extent of inefficiency is greater on the M.G. than on the B.G.

loading capacity, that about 30% and 45% of the wagon space of BG and MG respectively should go unutilised indicated that there is great scope for improvement.

Quite apart from the weight carrying capacity of 22 tons per BG wagon, two other physical factors, which in the case of the lighter commodities, limit the weight that can be loaded to much below this figure should not be overloaded, namely, the cubic capacity of wagons and the floor area of wagons. In the case of commodities, such as loose cotton, or hay, it is obviously not possible to expect a 22 ton load per wagon and therefore a composite figure of average wagon load for all commodities has necessarily to be well below 22 tons.

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The pattern of traffic has also changed and accounts for the drop in the average wagon load from 16.4 tons in 1951-52 to 16.1 tons in 1955-56. Whereas in 1951-52, the percentage of net ton-miles to the total ton-miles on the MG of coal was 43.4%, grains and oil-seeds 11.1%, other commodities 45.6% the corresponding figure for 1955-56 was 35.3% for coal, 9.8% for grains and oil-seeds and 54.9% for others. In other words, there was more traffic in lighter commodities.

Despite the factors detailed in the foregoing paras, it is noteworthy to record that the average wagon load per wagon has retained the figure

of 16·1 tons on the BG and 8·86 tons on the MG, as against the corresponding figures of 12·5 and 6·4 respectively, during the pre-war years.

(b) *Average speed of Goods trains.*

It was contended that there has been considerable deterioration in the speed of goods trains, with particular reference to Metre Gauge.

It is not possible to consider the speeds of trains isolated from the density of traffic and other relevant factors, such as, sectional capacity, tractive effort and class of locomotives etc.

When the utilisation of capacity of a section exceeds the limit of nearly 80 per cent the rate of fall in speed with even a slight increase in density of traffic is great, pointing to the need for increase in the section capacity.

The demand for transportation increased proportionately more on the denser sections, the Railway endeavoured to carry the additional traffic to the maximum extent possible even at the cost of a slight decline in speeds. This was adopted as a matter of deliberate policy

if a train could carry a heavier load though at a slightly lower speed, it was well worth it.

The figures of speed must also be viewed in the background of the work carried out currently along the track as such works necessitate speed restrictions and slow down speeds.

In view of the heavy rehabilitation programme undertaken, there were more than 1700 miles of track under engineering speed restriction at any one time due to arrears of replacement of rails and sleepers and section capacity works on hand, and this has been one of the major factors which has militated against better speeds of goods trains.

[Min. of Rlys. O.M. No. 56-B(C)-6000/-Recommendations (30) dated 12-7-57]

16 The conclusion arrived at is based on a comparison of performance during 1938-39 and the war years with the performance during 1953-54 and 1954-55. It has been assumed that the best results achieved during the war years could have been attained during recent years. Conditions during post-war years have been entirely different from those obtaining previously. Apart from the arrears of rehabilitation, Railways were faced with post-Partition problems. Additional traffic, both passenger and goods, had to be carried with inadequate facilities. A very important part of the Metre Gauge section was lost by Partition and a very difficult section i.e. the Assam Rail Link was added to the Metre Gauge. The comparison

- 59—70 The Committee have worked out the approximate financial effect of the fall in the maintenance and usage of wagons due to inefficiency and have arrived at the following figures:
- (In lakhs of Rs.)

| Year | Excess Revenue Expenditure incurred. | Extent to which earnings could have been increased. |
|---------|---|---|
| 1953—54 | 72 | 22 |
| 1954—55 | 42 | 22 |

| | B.G. | M.G. | B.G. | M.G. |
|---------|------|------|------|------|
| 1953—54 | 72 | 22 | 950 | 260 |
| 1954—55 | 42 | 22 | 560 | 60 |

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of operating performance during recent years with that obtaining during the war years will thus be not appropriate.

2. However, continuous efforts have been made to get over the drawbacks of the past, which were inherited as a result of the war and sustained attention has been paid to improve operational efficiency. Results in 1955-56 and during the current year testify that the steps taken have proved effective.

[Min. of Rlys. O.M. No. 56-B(c)-6000/-Recommendations (30), dated 23-1-1957]

80-95

The Committee have made a comparison of the extent of utilisation of power capacity in 1953-54 and 1954-55 as compared to the utilisation in 1938-39 and have noticed that the Railways suffered a loss of about 1.3 crores in each of the years 1953-54 and 1954-55 on the Broad Gauge and of 84 lakhs and 76 lakhs respectively in the two years on the metre gauge.

The exact extent to which inefficiency apart from other factors has contributed to this additional charge upon the revenues of the Railways is difficult to assess. The Committee, are however, of opinion that it may be held to be quite substantial.

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The comparison of operating performance during recent years with that obtaining during the war years will thus be not appropriate.

2. However, continuous efforts have been made to get over the drawbacks of the past, which were inherited as a result of the war and sustained attention has been paid to improve operational efficiency. Results in 1955-56 and during the current year testify that the steps taken have proved effective.

[Min. of Rlys. O. M. No. 56-B(c)-6000/-Recommendations (30), dated 23-1-57]

New Delhi;
March 28, 1959,
Chaitra 7, 1881 (Saka).

BALVANTRAY GOPALJEE MEHTA,
Chairman,
Estimate Committee.

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| 17. Reeves & Co., 29, Park Street, Calcutta-16. | 42. M. C. Sarkar & Sons (P) Ltd., 14, Bankim Chatterji Street, Calcutta-12. | 66. Jayana Book Depot, Chapparwala Kuan, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-5. | | |
| 18. The New Book Depot, Modi No. 3, Nagpur. | 43. People's Book House. B-2-8-829/1. Nizam Shahi Road, Hyderabad Dn. | 67. Bookland, 663, Madar Gate, Ajmer (Rajas-thar). | | |
| 19. The Kashmir Book Shop, Residency Road, Srinagar, Kashmir. | 44. W. Newman & Co. Ltd., 3, Old Court House Street, Calcutta. | 68. Oxford Book & Stationery Co., Scindia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi. | | |
| 20. The English Book Store, 7-L, Connaught Circus, New Delhi. | 45. Thackar Spink & Co. (1938) Private Ltd., 3, Esplanade East, Calcutta-1. | 69. Makkala Pustaka Press, Balamandira, Gandhinagar, Bangalore-9. | | |
| 21. Rama Krishna & Sons, 16-B, Connaught Place, New Delhi. | 46. Hindustan Diary Publi-shers, Market Street, Secunderabad. | 70. Gandhi Samriti Trust, Bhavnagar. | | |
| 22. International Book House, Private Ltd., 9, Ash Lane, Bombay. | 47. Laxami Narain Agarwal, Hospital Road, Agra. | | | |
| 23. Lakshmi Book Store, 42, 47 M. M. Queensway, New Delhi. | 48. Law Book Co., Sardar Patel Marg., Allahabad. | | | |
| 24. The Kalpana Publishers, Trichinopoly-3. | 49. D. B. Taraporevala & sons Co. Private Ltd., 210, Dr. Naoroji Road, Bombay-1. | | | |
| 25. S. K. Brothers, 15A/65, W.E.A., Karol Bagh, Dell i-5. | | | | |

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