

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS
(2004)

THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)

Railway Recruitment Policy

SEVENTEENTH REPORT



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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
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CHAPTER-I

RAILWAY RECRUITMENT POLICY – AN EVOLUTION

Before independence, recruitment of subordinate staff in Railways used to be done through a Service Commission established in July, 1942. After a review in 1945, four Service Commissions were set up at Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Lucknow under the Railway Board. The Railway Enquiry Committee in 1948 recommended for the permanence of the Service Commissions. However, the number of Commissions were reduced to one centrally located at Bombay in 1949 and after the improvement of financial situation in 1953-54 the same four Service Commissions were again set up.

1.2 In pursuance to the Estimate Committee's approval of the method of recruitment by these Service Commissions, additional Commissions at Muzaffarpur in 1973, Secunderabad and Guwahati in 1978, Bangalore in 1980, Danapur in 1981 were set up. In 1983 to cater to the needs of areas which were getting neglected due to locations of existing Commissions, seven more Commissions were set up at Ahmedabad, Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneshwar, Chandigarh, Jammu & Srinagar and Trivandrum. In 1984, two more Service Commissions were set up at Malda and Gorakhpur and a full fledged Commission at Ranchi was set up to cater exclusively for STs of the areas. These 19 Railway Service Commissions were renamed as Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) in 1985. The location and jurisdiction of these RRBs is placed at **Annexure-I**.

1.3 As per extant Recruitment Policy of the Railways, recruitment to Group 'A' posts is done through UPSC whereas Group 'B' posts are filled up cent per cent by promotion from the eligible Group 'C' employees. Group 'C' posts in initial recruitment grade and certain intermediate grades in the Railways and certain categories of RPF/RPSF like Assistant Inspector, Sub-Inspector etc. are filled through direct exam conducted by the Railway Recruitment Boards. Earlier, Group 'D' posts used to be filled by way of engagement of casual labour in the open line/construction by the field supervisors locally. However, pursuant to the announcement of the then Minister of Railways in 1996-97 for absorption of all the casual labourers, a ban was imposed on the engagement of casual labour for the future. During the Budget Speech in the year

1999-2000, the then Minister of Railways announced that the selection of Group 'D' (unskilled) category would be through an objective written test to improve the Group 'D' selection procedure and to streamline and make it more transparent and impartial. As a result of it, the recruitment for Group 'D' posts was handed over to Railway Recruitment Boards on 21.04.1999. However, this could not get materialised as the above procedure of recruitment through Railway Recruitment Boards underwent a change in the year 2000 and the status quo prior to April, 1999 was maintained. Subsequently in November 2001, the Railway Recruitment Boards were directed to recruit the Group 'D' posts in view of various difficulties being faced by the Zonal Railways.

1.4 Prior to March, 1998, RRBs were headed by non-railwaymen except cases which had serving Railway officers as Chairman. Though the appointments of Chairmen, RRBs were supposed to be made in consultation with UPSC, only two Railway Recruitment Boards were having Chairmen approved by UPSC in 1998 whereas the remaining were headed by outsiders on adhoc basis. However, after the review of RRBs during the same year, services of adhoc Chairmen were terminated and they were replaced by serving Railway Officers of proven integrity working in Senior Administrative Grade. This was done because it is easy to verify the antecedents of Railway Officers, whereas in the case of outsiders, it is not always possible to ascertain their antecedents accurately. After the approval of the Union Public Service Commission in this regard, the change in the recruitment rules of Chairman, RRB was accordingly notified in the Gazette subsequently.

1.5 In pursuance of the Department of Personnel & Training's (DOPTs) Guidelines dated 18.05.1998 wide publicity of the Employment Notices in the Employment News and newspapers having wide circulation and by supplying Vacancy Notifications to Employment Exchanges have been resorted to.

CHAPTER-II

AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Railway Recruitment Boards are the only agency responsible for conduct of written examination of the candidates for direct recruitment quota vacancies in Group 'C' and 'D' post including certain categories of RPF/RPSF post. They function under the direct control of RRCB at Railway Board level. Also RRBs engages outside Computer Agency for pre and post examination work. The entire selection process of direct recruitment involves RRCB, RRBs, outside Computer Agency, RDSO/Safety Commissioner's office and the Railway Deptt./Division/Production Units/Administration. The extent of their involvement in the selection process is given the following paras.

Railway Recruitment Control Board

The Railway Board reviewed the functioning of the Railway Recruitment Boards in 1998 in view of wide-spread allegations of corruption and malpractices on the part of many Chairmen of Railway Recruitment Boards. As a result of that review, a Railway Recruitment Control Board (RRCB) was established in 1998 in the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board). The constitution of the RRCB is as under:-

Member Staff, Railway Board	-	Chairman
Additional Member (Staff), Railway Board	-	Member
Adviser (Vigilance), Railway Board	-	Member
Executive Director, Establishment (RRB) (Railway Board)	-	Secretary

The objectives of the RRCB are:-

- Formulation of policy in regard to recruitment procedures.
- Monitoring the activities of all Railway Recruitment Boards including expenditure incurred for recruitment.
- Evaluating the performance of RRBs and advise them on priorities as required.

- Organizing a management information system for monitoring work done by RRBs.

2.2 Elaborating further on the role of RRCB, the Chairman, Railway Board apprised the Committee of the following during the oral evidence:-

“RRCB is situated in the Ministry, and the Member (Staff) heads it. He is the Chairman of the Board (RRCB) and other Members Assist him. ... He takes care of the monitoring, policy guidelines coordinating and evaluation of the performance of the various RRBs. These are the jobs that the RRCB takes care of. As Members of the Board, Adviser (Vigilance) and Adviser (Staff) assist him. The Executive Director (RRB) is the Secretary to that Board (RRCB).”

Railway Recruitment Boards

2.3 Presently there are 19 Railway Recruitment Boards conducting written examination for recruitment to the posts of Group ‘C’ & ‘D’ of the Railways/Production Units including certain categories of RPF/RPSF posts. Each Railway Recruitment Board normally has a Chairman, a Member Secretary/Assistant Secretary and supporting non-gazetted staff. Appointment of Chairman RRB is made from amongst serving railway Senior Administrative Officers. Member Secretaries are appointed from serving Junior Administrative Officers and Assistant Secretaries from Group ‘B’ Officers of the contiguous Railway catered by the RRB.

2.4 The RRBs function under the direct control of Railway Recruitment Control Board at the Railway Board level and follow the instructions and guidelines of the RRCB issued time to time to ensure that recruitment is done properly and quality candidates are recruited in Railway Service in accordance with Government policy on the basis of merit. They meet the recruitment requirements of the Railways adequately accepting the applications from the candidates all over the country in response to their advertisement published in Employment News Rozgar Samachar. Advertisements are also issued in National dailies and Regional newspapers. The provisions of giving wide publicity for filling up Group ‘C’ and ‘D’ categories of posts is based on Department of Personnel and Training’s instructions issued in 1998, which were formulated pursuant to

a judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 22.08.1996 (Excise Superintendent Vs K.B.N. Vishveshwra Rao).

2.5 All written examinations are of objective type only. RRBs have the right to conduct additional examination or re-examinations wherever considered necessary by the Chairman. The written examination will be of a standard consistent with the minimum qualifications prescribed for the particular post and job requirements thereof.

2.6 The Committee were informed that the RRB is the sole agency entrusted with the work of selection process, finalisation of panel and furnishing the same to the indenting Railway/PUs. The jurisdiction of RRB is broadly determined by its geographical location and the Zonal Railway/Division(s) to which it can cater. However, the Ministry admitted that the question of jurisdiction of RRBs is under review.

2.7 Responding to the concern of the Committee to review the constitution of RRBs in view of transport convenience and availability of accommodation for candidates and their regional aspirations, the Chairman, Railway Board submitted before the Committee as under:-

“There are 19 RRBs and, as we know, each RRB caters for a certain number of Divisions in the Zonal Railways. It is specified and is based on the geographical area and placement of the RRB; the Divisions of the Zonal Railways. But after those incidents (Assam, Bihar and Maharashtra) – which the hon. Chairman of the Committee mentioned – we are trying to review it and reshuffle the composition of the RRBs to make it State-geographical based. “

He further added:-

“It means that we are making minor reshuffles to the places where the State is located, and where the Divisions are located. Suppose the Division predominantly falls in a State and the RRB is also in that State, then we are trying to make minor changes by including that Division with the concerned RRB; we think this should mitigate the problem to some extent.”

COMPUTER AGENCY

2.8 The Ministry informed the Committee that Chairman, RRB is responsible for engaging a Computer Agency for pre and post examination work i.e. scrutiny of applications, preparation of call letters, dispatch of call letters, evaluation of Optical Mark Reader (OMR) answer sheets, preparation of merit list etc. Engagement of computer agencies for pre-examination work is done on limited quotation basis as the work involved is essentially transferring particulars as given in application to the computer database as also scanning of the photograph & signature. Computer agency for post-examination work is, however, on single quotation basis, as the work involved here is essentially confidential in nature besides requiring high degree of accuracy and trustworthiness.

2.9 The Ministry further informed the Committee that the Computer Agency scrutinizes the applications received for eligibility. Each application is given a Control Number. Applications received after closing date are considered ineligible. Data of eligible applications is fed into computer by the Computer Agency and a data list is generated. Call Letters are dispatched to the candidates 04 weeks in advance from the scheduled date of written examination with scanned photograph of candidate. Call Letters of SC/ST candidates bear a free rail authority in Sleeper Class for to and fro journey from home station to the city/town where examination is held. The RRBs give bold advertisement in Employment News/Rozgar Samachar and Local Newspapers giving date of examination for information of candidates clearly indicating that if the candidates do not receive the call letters in time, they should personally contact the RRB office on specified dates before the examination day, for collecting duplicate call letters or for correction of discrepancies, if any, in the Call Letters. This is done so as

to take sufficient measures for the information of candidates who do not receive Call Letter for any reason.

When questioned the need for switching over to private agencies and engaging them for pre and post examination work, while the computerized activities of Indian Railways are being handled by CRIS, the Ministry stated that though it may be possible for CRIS to develop the software after detailed study and analysis of the requirement, it is not desirable to go in for such development.

The Chairman Railway Board stated during the oral evidence “we can again look into it.” He further added “we want to involve minimum number of people. We ensure the most impeccable track record for the Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board. He is the only person who knows what is the paper. He only selects it from the question bank. Even the Chairman, Railway Board and the Member Staff will not know from where he is getting it printed”.

CHAPTER-III

PROCESS & PROCEDURE OF RECRUITMENT

Indents are placed by the Railways/Production Units for the posts in all categories (Group 'C' & 'D') technical and non-technical, specifying the number of vacancies reserved for SC, ST, OBC, Ex-servicemen etc. The Employment Notice issued by the RRBs contain all information regarding recruitment procedure and concessions relaxation available to reserved categories/Ex-servicemen and the number of vacancies reserved for them. Age relaxation for various categories of persons is specified by the Railways/Production Units in the indents and the same is invariably indicated by the RRBs in the Employment Notices, bearing the date of issue and closing date for receipt of applications, which is normally a month from the date of issue.

Candidates are required to send their applications as per the format given in the Employment Notice. Each candidate is allowed to send only one application for a recruitment examination of a particular RRB. Candidature of candidates submitting more than one application is rejected.

3.2 The Ministry have informed the Committee that as on 30.11.2003 there were 118052 vacancies for Group 'C' and 39759 vacancies for Group 'D'. Details (Railway-wise) of vacancies of Group 'C' and 'D' for the last five years have been given at Annexure-II

Academic Qualification

3.3 The Committee have been informed that there are almost 300-400 categories in the Group 'C' & 'D' posts including technical and non-technical. The academic qualifications vary from post to post but 10th standard is the minimum for Group 'C' and 8th standard for Group 'D' has been fixed for non-technical posts in both the cases.

3.4 Responding to a suggestion of the Committee as to why not the academic standards be raised from 8th to 10th for the Group 'D' posts keeping into account the unmanageable number of applications and the harvesting of the posts by those who are

having over qualifications, depriving the 8th pass candidates, the Chairman, Railway Board submitted before the Committee as under:-

“what you have said is very correct. But the thing is that the qualification is also related to the pay scales. The 8th class pass’s pay scale is minimum. If we raise it to minimum 10th class, then it becomes difficult as we will have to give them higher pay scales.”

Aptitude/Psychological/Typing Test and Interview

3.5 The Committee came to know that Psychological Test/Typing Test and Interview as applicable, are conducted for the number of candidates as under:-

Psychological Test	General & OBC candidates @ 3 times the number of vacancies and SC/ST candidates @ 4 times the number of vacancies.
Typing Test	5 times the number of vacancies.
Stenography Test	10 times the number of vacancies.
Interview	2-1/2 times the number of vacancies.

3.6 Psychological test is conducted by the Senior Scientific Officers of the Zonal Railways nominated by RDSO Lucknow under the administrative charge of Chief Safety Officer. Psychological Test is a qualifying test. Candidates failing in Psychology Test are eliminated from the selection process.

3.7 The Ministry also informed that in terms of Railway Board’s instructions dated 4.6.2003. Psychological Test would now be named as ‘Aptitude Test’, applicable to the direct recruitment of Assistant Station Master, Diesel/Elec. Assistant and Motorman. Marks of Written Examination will be converted to a marks base of 70 and Aptitude Test of maximum 30 marks. Marks obtained in the Written Test are to be added to the marks obtained in Aptitude Test for preparing combined merit list out of 100 marks. It has been stipulated that a candidate is required to obtain minimum qualifying marks in the Written Test. A candidate failing to obtain minimum qualifying marks in Written Test will not be called for Aptitude Test. Further, a candidate must obtain minimum laid down qualifying marks on the basis of ‘aggregate of both Written Test and Aptitude Test’ also.

The Interview Committee comprises of:

- (i) Chairman, RRB or Member Secretary, RRB as the Chairman.
- (ii) Serving Railway officer of J.A. Grade from the department for which the recruitment is being made; and
- (iii) Serving Railway Officers of J.A. Grade from each of the communities viz. SC/ST/OBC and Minority. (In view of non-availability of J.A. Grade Officers from OBC community, representation from Senior Scale officers has been permitted).

3.8 Regarding the abolition of interview in most of the cases, the Ministry submitted that interviews have been eliminated as mentioned in Annexure-III in most of RRB examinations. However, for the categories in Group IV of Annexure-III, which still have interviews as part of the selection, the allocation of marks is 85% for written examination and 15% for interview.

In this regard Chairman Railway Board, during the oral evidence apprised the Committee :

“Of late we have eliminated the interview process. It is because it was more of a subjective approach. We have totally eliminated the process of interviews excepting in a few categories like teachers, Lab Assistant, Physiotherapist and Telephone Operator.

Qualifying Marks

3.9 Regarding the need to review the qualifying marks required in the written examinations, the Ministry submitted in a written reply as under:-

'The question of enhancing qualifying marks for all community candidates was examined in detail. Railway Safety Review Committee (Khanna Committee) had also recommended enhancement of qualifying marks to 50% for general candidates and 45% for reserved category candidates. Before that the qualifying percentage for RRB examinations was 20% for SC/ST candidates and 30% for general candidates. On partially accepting the recommendation of the Railway Safety Review Committee by the Railway Board the qualifying percentages for SC/ST and OBC candidates were raised to 25% and for general candidates to 35% with a rider to review the minimum qualifying marks after a year or so. On review, the Railway Board have enhanced the qualifying marks in the written examination to 25% for ST candidates, 30% for SC & OBC candidates and 40% for general candidates. The percentages of qualifying marks have been fixed in view of shortfall in the categories of SCs and STs. Any further enhancement at this juncture in case of ST community candidates would result in more shortfall in filling up of these vacancies.'

3.10 The Ministry further stated:-

'In respect of the categories in Group-II all eligible candidates are called for Preliminary written examination and based on the merit position in Preliminary written examination, candidates equal to 10 times the number of vacancies are called for Final Written Examination. Selection is based on merit position obtained in the Final Examination alone.

For selections where the number of applications is very high (like Enquiry-cum-Reservation Clerk, Ticket Collector, Assistant Station Master, Goods Guards etc.) a 1st stage examination is conducted and thereafter 2nd stage examination is held in which candidates equal to 10 times the number of vacancies are called, based on the performance in the Preliminary Examination.

Candidates applying for Diesel/Elect. Assistant and Assistant Station Master posts are required to send a 'Vision Test Certificate' in a prescribed Performa issued by a registered medical officer. At the time of certificate verification in the RRB office the selected candidates are required to pass vision test from a Railway Hospital before empanelment. Those failing in vision test are not empanelled. Candidates selected for the categories of Diesel Elect. Assistant/Assistant Station Master are not eligible for any alternative appointment.'

Time Taken to Finalise Results

3.11 Elaborating on time taken for preparing the final results of the exams conducted by the RRBs in their respective jurisdictions, the Ministry of Railways stated that instructions have been issued to the RRBs to provide selection panels within 9-12 months where only written examination(s) is involved, and within 15-18 months where written examination is to be followed by psycho test & vision test in case of Safety categories post and interview where applicable. However, the recruitment procedure for various kinds of posts varies on the basis of first stage written examination or two stage examination or first stage written examination plus psychological (aptitude) test or interview, as the case may be.

3.12 Responding to the concern of the Committee to explore the feasibility to reduce the present schedule of preparing final results, the Ministry submitted as under:-

'There are problems faced by RRBs for hiring of educational institutions for lakhs of candidates for holding examinations as there are many other professional and recruitment agencies normally hiring educational institutions for their examinations as also non-availability during festival seasons, examination months etc. RRB's Employment Notification invites applications from candidates within 30 days' time. Processing of applications by generating various kinds of data is done by Computer Agency, which is appointed by Chairman of the RRB. Time taken for processing the applications forms depends on the volume of applications received, which may be upto 3 months. While issuing admit cards/call letters it is ensured that the same are dispatched at least 4 weeks before the date of examination. Evaluation of answer sheets by Computer

Agency takes time upto a month or so. Results of written test examination are declared by the RRB only after physically checking of the applications of the candidates who are likely to qualify the written test, which is a time consuming process. Any further written examination (Second stage, wherever required)/ psycho test/interview requires call letters to be dispatched 4 weeks before the examination/test/interview.'

Further clarifying the requirement of a long time to declare the final results by the RRBs, the Member Staff (Railway Board) and Chairman, Railway Recruitment Control Board submitted as under:-

'The period of nine to twelve months is not from the date of examination. It is the date from which the indent is received. When the Zones give the requirement, the RRB starts processing it. After the examination, it will depend on the number of candidates.'

Transparency in the process of Selection

Elaborating upon maintaining transparency in the process of selection by Railway Recruitment Boards, the Chairman Railway Board apprised the Committee :

"Chairman that we recruit in the RRB is of an impeccable record. The Chairman before March 1998 used to be from outside and it used to be an ad-hoc appointment. It was not done through the UPSC. So, these are the positive improvement that we have carried out in our RRBs."

He further submitted

"giving wide publicity is itself a plus point because everybody gets a level playing ground."

3.13 Enumerating other steps taken during the last five years for improving the functioning of RRBs, procedures and complete transparency in the process of recruitment, the Ministry submitted the following:-

'(a) In order to ensure that Answer Script of a candidate is not manipulated later on, and also to ensure that the final marks are

strictly in accordance with the answers given by the candidates, a system of duplicate answer scripts was introduced. The answer script comprises two sheets placed one over the other, such that impression made on the top sheet also gets transferred to the second copy placed below through the process of carbonless copy impression.

- (b) It was decided that original answer copy (top sheet) as well as duplicate (bottom sheet) would be separated, packed and sealed separately at the examination centre itself. Thereafter, the original would be handed over directly to the computer evaluation agency and duplicate set was sent duly sealed, directly to the office of Railway Recruitment Control Board for record and check.
- (c) A system of record and retrieval was set up in the office of Railway Recruitment Control Board by which every single answer script, out of the lakhs of answer scripts generated during examination, can be retrieved immediately for the purpose of spot checks. It was also decided that duplicate scripts would be checked in case of any allegations or a complaint from a candidate. In addition duplicate answer script were also used for random checks, in order to be doubly sure that there were no mistakes or irregularities in evaluation process.
- (d) It was ensured that identity of the question paper printer; examiner as well as the evaluation agency were known only to the Chairman of the Railway Recruitment Board so as to avoid any possibility of any outside influence.
- (e) A set of guidelines were issued for handling of Question Papers at different stages. A method of opening of Question Paper packets after obtaining acknowledgements from the examinees in the

examination hall itself, certifying that the Question Paper booklets were opened in their presence was introduced.

- (f) A system of accountal to ensure that not a single question paper was missing as well as other guidelines were issued in detail by Railway Recruitment Control Board through a series of instructions.
- (g) In order to eliminate subjectivity altogether, interviews, which were an integral part of recruitment process earlier, were eliminated except for the categories of Teachers, Law Assistants, Physiotherapist & Telephone operators.
- (h) In order to ensure that candidates do not take wrongful advantage of recruitment through a written examination alone a system of two stages written examination (where the applicant are large in number) was introduced.
- (i) The second stage in the categories of Assistant Station Master, Assistant Drivers and Motorman comprises a set of 6 psychological tests. The second stage examination is yet another written examination with every possible precaution against examination hall malpractices.
- (j) In order to ensure that nobody is in a position to misuse the Psychological test, a system of duplicate answer scripts was introduced in the Psychological test as well. The original answer script is retained by Psychologist conducting the examination in the Zonal Railway and the duplicate answer scripts are collected immediately by another officer exclusively deputed for the purpose (other than the person who conduct the examination). The duplicate is sent to the RRCB. It was also decided that the answer script of psychological tests would be 'coded' by the Chairman of the Railway Recruitment Board before giving it to Psychologists for

evaluation. In this process, the person who does the coding (the Chairman of Railway Recruitment Board) the person who evaluates (Psychologists) and the person who keeps the records for super checks on evaluation (Secretary, Railway Recruitment Control Board) are geographically apart, thus eliminating any chances of malpractices.

- (k) In order to prevent candidates copying from each other in the examination hall, the question papers containing the same questions are printed in four series, having same questions in different sequence and candidates are seated in the examination hall in such a manner that two adjacent candidates do not get question papers of the same series. Further, steps introduced for controlling malpractices on the part of candidates are also narrated below:
- (l) Scanned photographs of the candidates are printed on the Admit Cards.
- (m) Candidates are required to write a paragraph in the Application Form, as also during written examination, so as to obtain adequate sample of their handwriting. In case of any suspicion of impersonation, arising at the time of document verification, this evidence is referred to Government Examiner of Questioned Documents (GEQD) for his expert opinion.
- (n) Photographs of the candidates is compared at the time of entry in the examination hall.
- (o) Thumb impression of the candidate is taken at the time of the application and during the course of written examination which is further compared at the time of document verification.

- (p) Later on when it was decided to conduct recruitment to Group 'D' which involves physical efficiency test also, through Railway Recruitment Boards, it was legislated that the result of the Physical Efficiency Test shall be displayed on the notice Board on the same Day, in the presence of the candidates who appear in the Test. Also, any complaint by any candidate shall be dealt on the spot. This system ensures that there is no possibility of any manipulation in the Physical Efficiency Test.

In regard to maintaining transparency during the evaluation process Chairman Railway Board inter-alia brought out :

“We have an Optical Mark Reader (OMR). The whole evaluation process is done with the help of the Optical Mark Reader, which is linked with a computer. This is an absolutely foolproof system. It evaluates the replies given by the examinees in their answer sheets accurately. There is absolutely no chance of an error. The answers in it cannot be changed because a duplicate copy of the same answer sheet is already available with the RRCB at Rail Bhawan. So, if anybody tries to change the answers, then it is subject to verification.”

He further added :

”besides using the Optical Mark Reader we also check a certain percentage of the answer sheets manually just to make sure that the Optical Mark Reader has not gone wrong at any point of time. So the procedure is well laid down, and we follow that in this case.”

3.14 Commending further the foolproof system which the Railway Recruitment Boards have adopted to ensure total transparency in the process of Recruitment by the Railways, the Chairman, Railway Board, during the evidence enlightened the Committee of the following facts:-

“Only the Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) knows about the question papers that are prepared for these examinations. ... Even the Chairman, Railway Board and the Member Staff (Chairman, RRCB) will not know

from where he is getting it printed. We are not supposed to know it at all. He will be hanged if anything goes wrong. But it has been a time tested procedure. “

Sports Quota

3.15 The Ministry informed the Committee that the annual quota of 1200 posts indicates the overall limit upto which recruitment of sportsperson can be made on the Indian Railways against sports quota. It is not irrespective of the number of vacancies occurring each year. The actual appointments of sportspersons are made against accrual of vacancies.

Member Staff apprised the Committee during oral evidence “There is no recruitment on sport quota” on enquiry whether any relaxation in educational qualification/experience/age is granted, the Ministry stated that recruitment of sportspersons against the sports quota is made on a 50:50 basis through open advertisement and Talent Scouting Scheme. Sportspersons applying in response to open advertisements must possess the required educational qualification, age and sports norms. No relaxation in any of these parameters is permissible. However, in respect of recruitment under the talent scouting scheme, relaxation in educational qualification and age limit can be given with the approval of Railway Board in deserving cases.

Compassionate Appointments

3.16 Regarding compassionate appointments, the Ministry apprised the Committee that compassionate appointments are given to the eligible spouse/wards of ex-Railway employees who die in harness or are medically invalidated. During the last 3 years i.e. from 1.4.2000 to 31.3.2003, approximately 29,000 appointment have been made on compassionate grounds and around 4,700 requests were pending as on 31.3.2003.

However, Chairman Railway Board stated during oral evidence “the compassionate appointments cannot be claimed as a matter of right but are considered on merits of the case keeping into account the financial position of the claimant.”

3.17 He further added:-

“We send our Welfare Inspector and he finds out everything, like the number of earning members and all these things. If it is found that he/she is

having a lot of ancestral property and all, then it is not his or her birth right to have the job on compassionate ground.

The First claimant to the job is his wife and then first son. We have elaborate guidelines on that. A written test is conducted. The candidate has to qualify in that written test.”

Multiplicity of Candidates

3.18 The Committee were apprised by the representatives of the Ministry during evidence that the Railway Recruitment Boards receive lakhs of applications against a few vacancies at times because of the duplicity of applications. Each candidate irrespective of his geographical location can apply to any post subject to his or her eligibility and to any Railway Recruitment Boards in the country. The Railway Recruitment Boards are bound to entertain such duplicity of applications because of the Guidelines of the Department of Personnel and Training (DOPT) dated 18.05.1998 in view of the judgement of Hon’ble Supreme Court in 1996 (Excise Superintendent Vs K.B.N. Vishveshwra Rao dated 22.08.1996). Holding of separate exam on different dates by each RRB also contributed to the multiplication of applications.

3.19 Sharing the concern of the Committee for the unmanageable number of applications for a few posts, the Chairman, Railway Board submitted as under:-

“We are bound by the decisions of the Supreme Court and we have to give the publicity in all the papers, media and all that. We do give publicity through the Employment News and we also approach the Employment Exchanges. We do all sorts of publicity. The applicants need not be within the geographical jurisdiction of the RRB and that is because of the decision of the Supreme Court.”

3.20 Sharing the views of the Committee that at least Group ‘D’ posts be filled respecting the regional aspirations of the local people who are well versed with the local topography and vernacular language, the Chairman, Railway Board during the oral evidence submitted before the Committee as under:-

“fully agree with the Hon’ble Members. The only thing which comes in the way is Supreme Court judgement. I am trying my best to see and device if

Group 'D' recruitment we can made local based as it will be much easier and practical.”

Annexure-I

LIST OF RAILWAY RECRUITMENT BOARDS WITH THEIR JURISDICTION

S. N.	Location of RRB	Railway/PU	Jurisdiction Division/Units
1.	Ahmedabad	Western	Vadodra, Rajkot, Bhavnagar, Ratlam, Ahmedabad
2.	Ajmer	North Western	HQ Office of North Western Railway, Jaipur, Ajmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner.
3.	Allahabad	North Central	HQ Office of North Central Railway, Allahabad, Jhansi, Agra DLW.
4.	Bangalore	South Western	HQ Office of South Western Railway, Hubli, Bangalore, Mysore.
5.	Bhopal	West Central South East Central	HQ Office of West Central Railway Jabalpur, Bhopal, Kota. HQ Office of South East Central Railway, Bilaspur, Nagpur, Raipur.
6.	Bhubneshwar	East Cost South Eastern	HQ Office of East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, Sambhalpur Chakardharpur (Except ST Quota)
7.	Kolkata	Eastern South Eastern	HQ Office of Easter Railway, Howrah, Asansol, Sealdah HQ Office of South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur CLW, Metro Railway
8.	Chandigarh	Northern	HQ Office of Northern Railway, Delhi, Ambala, Lucknow, Moradabad DCW
9.	Chennai	Southern	HQ Office of Southern Railway, Chennai, Madurai, Tiruchchirappalli ICF
10.	Gorakhpur	North Eastern	HQ Office of North Eastern Railway, Lucknow, Izatnagar, Varanasi RDSO
11.	Guwahati	Northeast Frontier	HQ Office of Northeast Frontier Railway, Alipurduar, Lumding, Tinsukia, Rangiya.
12.	Jammu Srinagar	- Northern	Ferozepur RCF
13.	Malda	Eastern Northeast Frontier	Malda Katihar (Darjelling Hill Railway Section only)

14.	Mumbai	Western Central	H.Qs, Office of Western Railway, Mumbai Central. H.Qs. Office of Central Railway Mumbai (CST), Bhusaval, Nagpur, Sholapur, Pune.
15.	Muzaffarpur	East Central	Samastipur & Sonapur
16.	Patna	East Central N.F.	HQ Office of E.C. Railway Mughalsarai, Danapur, Dhanbad Katihar (Except DH Rly. Section). (Except ST Quota of the above four Divns.)
17.	Ranchi	South Eastern South Eastern East Central N.F.	Ranchi, Adra, - All Communities Chakradharpur – ST Quota only. ST Quota only Danapur, Mughalsarai, Dhanbad. Katihar – ST Quota only.
18.	Secunderabad	South Central East Cost	HQ Office of South Central Railway, Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Guntakal, Vijayawada, Guntur, Nanded Waltair
19.	Thiruvanthapuram	Southern	Palghat & Thiruvananthapuram

Annexure-II

Zonewise and Groupwise number of Vacancies for the last five years

Railway	31.03.99		31.03.2000		31.03.2001		31.03.2002		31.03.2003		30.11.2003	
	Grp 'C'	Grp 'D'	Grp 'C'	Grp 'D'	Grp 'C'	Grp 'D'	Grp 'C'	Grp 'D'	Grp 'C'	Grp 'D'	Grp 'C'	Grp 'D'
CENTRAL	10138	-1988	11244	-1197	11244	-1197	12534	1067	9755	1069	10246	1971
EASTERN	13223	550	12463	4193	13014	2809	15958	1379	9406	2595	9678	3236
NORTHERN	12799	4271	9522	2667	11034	-777	12444	-830	10685	435	11485	864
NORTH EASTERN	5984	-2158	5723	-1833	6440	-650	6899	-830	5326	-1069	5108	-38
NORTHEAST FRONTIER	5197	3209	5581	3400	6353	3596	6521	3114	7577	2185	8246	1998
SOUTHERN	8554	2706	8784	1655	8231	2661	10341	2129	7845	3463	8810	3115
SOUTH CENTRAL	8248	1360	8191	1964	9222	1994	9648	2163	6852	1922	7725	2516
SOUTH EASTERN	15080	4393	14779	6981	13991	9710	17577	8004	9806	6512	11067	5902
SOUTH EAST CENTRAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4598	2875	5848	3396
WESTERN	18210	-7757	8748	2004	8304	1550	5789	6061	8772	5212	8784	6863
EAST COAST	1265	454	885	742	38	17	38	18	3899	3280	4400	3887
EAST CENTRAL	1417	-368	1293	-78	173	-56	175	-40	6729	1440	7390	2496
NORTH CENTRAL	2067	98	1451	-873	0	17	1	19	4806	-262	5335	-723
NORTH WESTERN	420	-201	483	151	4	24	3	22	5607	2016	5832	2514
SOUTH WESTERN	958	318	833	330	8	11	9	11	3101	1387	3328	1275
WEST CENTRAL	987	-398	793	-786	56	34	57	35	3950	344	4770	487
TOTAL	104547	4293	90773	19320	88112	19744	97994	22322	108714	33404	118052	39759

-ve figures indicate surplus staff

Annexure – III

<u>Group</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Method of Selection</u>
I.	Safety category posts, for which Aptitude Test has been prescribed, like ASM, SM, Asst. Driver (Electric/Diesel), Motorman	Single Written examination followed by Aptitude Test (No Interview)
II.	Non Technical Popular Categories (NTPC)	Two stage written examination (No Interview)
III.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Apprentice Mechanic2. Asstt. Shop Supdt.3. Jr. Engineer4. Section Engineer5. P. Way Mistries (PWM)6. Draftman7. Chief Draftman8. JCMA9. CMA10. Staff Nurse11. Health/Malaria Inspector12. Pharmacists13. Radiographer14. Lab Asstt./Lab. Supdt.15. Dietician16. Catering Supervisor-III17. Catering Supervisor-II18. DSK-III19. Finger Print Examiner20. Artisans21. Library Information Assistant	Single written examination (No Interview)
IV.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lab Assistant2. Teachers3. Physiotherapist4. Telephone Operator	Single written examination followed by Interview
V	Hindi Assistant	Single written examination (Objective Type) plus qualifying translation test with minimum of 60% marks. (No Interview)
VI	Stenographers (both Hindi & English)	This is conducted in two stages consisting of written test followed by speed test.

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee have noted that there are 19 Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) all over the country to meet the need of recruitment of Group 'C' and Group 'D' posts for the Railways and their Production Units. These RRBs have been set up keeping into account the administrative convenience of the Railways to cater to the recruitment needs of certain Zonal Railways/Railway Divisions and the Railway Production Units based in a specific geographical area. The Committee have also noticed that these RRBs are not geographically State-based. As a result of this, the applicants from all over the country compete for the posts advertised for recruitment by any of the RRBs. They observe that the present location of these RRBs has resulted in the multiplicity of contenders for a few posts ultimately causing a great inconvenience to the candidates from other States regarding travelling, accommodation etc. on the one hand and huge administrative, managerial and financial burden on the RRB of the area on the other.

The Committee are of the considered view that the RRBs should have been established on more rational and practical criteria after taking into account not only the administrative convenience of the Railways but also the convenience of the applicants. They, therefore, strongly recommend to the Ministry to review the jurisdiction of all the existing RRBs and reshuffle/relocate the same on more practical and rational basis. They are of the opinion that in this way not only the unmanageable burden of the RRBs will get reduced but hardships of travelling and accommodation etc. to the examinees from far flung States will also be addressed to. Moreover, the Committee are of the view that if need be, more RRBs can be established to provide equal opportunity and level playing field to all sections of Indian society both urban and rural.

2. The Committee find that the RRBs are holding examinations as per the indent of requirement of posts furnished by the Zonal/Divisional Railways and the Production Units of the Railways falling under their respective jurisdiction. Each RRB conducts these examinations independently on separate dates. Multiplication of application for a few posts has posed a challenge for each RRB to conduct the competitive exams in an efficient and effective way. The Committee have been apprised by the Ministry of the fact that the RRBs are bound by the Guidelines of the Department of Personnel & Training dated 18.05.1998 issued in pursuance of the Supreme Court's Verdict on 22.08.1996 (Excise Superintendent Vs K.B.K. Vishveshwa Rao). These guidelines permit every prospective candidate irrespective of his geographic location to apply to any RRB for any post, which ultimately leads to duplicity of applications. It has led to a chaotic situation where for even very few posts innumerable applicants from all over the country apply for the examination conducted by each RRB. Moreover, this has increased monetary, managerial and supervisory burden on the RRBs. Simultaneously examinees also suffer a lot in terms of non-availability of adequate rail reservation, road transport and accommodation facilities.

The Committee therefore, express their unhappiness over such huge amount of wasteful expenditure. They, therefore, are constrained to recommend that the Railway Recruitment Control Board (RRCB) in coordination with all RRBs must ensure a common advertisement of all posts of all categories, required to be filled up once or twice a year as per their administrative and managerial convenience, the written examination for common categories in all the RRBs be held simultaneously in a synchronised way. They are of the firm view that by resorting to such practice, the duplicity of applications will get drastically reduced to manageable level ultimately benefiting at large the local people of the area, examinees and excess monetary & managerial burden on Railways.

During the course of oral evidence, the representatives of the Ministry of Railways apprised the Committee that the Ministry would look into the matter concerning the recruitment of Group 'D' posts from local areas. They also opined

that it would be much easier and practical if it is made local based. The Committee, keeping into account the legal aspect and the aspiration of the local people desire that the Ministry may seek legal opinion from the concerned Ministries/Departments in this regard so that their aspiration may be, if possible, accommodated.

3. The Committee have noted that the minimum academic qualification for Group 'D' & Group 'C' posts has been specified as 8th standard and 10th standard respectively. As in most of the States no board examination for 8th Standard is being held, it becomes very difficult to check the veracity and authenticity of the same. Moreover, prescribing lesser qualification for Group 'D' posts often results and getting a large number of applications. The Committee, therefore, are of the unanimous view that the minimum academic qualification for Group 'D' post be fixed as 10th standard which will not only ensure veracity of the certificate but also reduce the number of contenders and enhance the general awareness of Group 'D' staff. They also stress that in the advertisement for the examination itself the pay scales of Class 'D' post may be specified.

4. The Committee have been apprised by the Ministry that normally 9-18 months time is taken to hand over the panel of selected candidates to the indenting Railway Departments/Production Units. However, sometimes the time taken by the Railway Recruitment Boards in preparing final results extends upto 2 years. Though the Railways count this time from the date of indent of requirement, it has been usually noticed that the time schedule for final selection has not been strictly adhered to. The Committee are of the opinion that this not only creates uncertainty in the minds of the unemployed youth but also results in keeping the vacancies pending in the

indenting Railway Departments/Production units. They also caution the Ministry that during the period of this delay meritorious candidates, who have been selected, may join elsewhere thereby making the entire process of selection futile. The Committee lament that despite making use of computerisation in the selection process, the RRBs have not been able to reduce the time taken in

preparing the final results. They, therefore, strongly recommend that the results of all examinations be necessarily declared within a period of 3 months from the date of conducting the examination.

5. The Committee have also taken a serious note that the number of vacancies in Group 'D' has increased to 39759 in 2003 from 4293 in 1999. The vacancies in Group 'C' also continued to hover around one lakh, which is also matter worth considering. The Committee are of the view that the main reason for such a large number of vacancies is on account of the fact that the examinations are not conducted regularly by the respective RRBs. Besides, time consuming process involved in the recruitment is another big factor which has contributed towards this. They, therefore, are of the considered opinion that the pace of recruitment be expedited in view of huge backlog of vacancies in aforesaid categories.

6. During the course of examination of the subject in question, the Committee have come across the fact that there were 4700 requests pending for compassionate appointments as on 31.03.2003. They were also briefed by the Ministry that the compassionate appointments are provided as a matter of compassion and not as a matter of right. The Ministry further informed that on the basis of Welfare Inspector's Report regarding the financial health of the family, the appointment on compassionate ground is decided. The Committee are not inclined to agree with the methodology that is being presently adopted by the Railways for appointments under the compassionate category. They are of

the view that such cases need to be treated on a different footing altogether. They therefore, desired that for such cases the eligibility criteria for Group 'C' posts should be based on minimum educational qualification and in the case of Group 'D' posts it should be based on medical fitness of the candidates besides the minimum required qualification. In case these requirements are fulfilled the other criteria such as testing, ascertaining the financial position etc. should be dispensed with.

7. The Committee also note that the Railway Safety Review Committee (Khanna Committee) had recommended for enhancement of qualifying marks in the written examination to 50% for general candidates and 45% marks for reserved category candidates. However, the Railway Board raised the same to 40% for general candidates, 30% for SC & OBC and 25% for ST candidates w.e.f. 1.11.2003. The Committee are of the view that the paramount aspect of safety and security of the Railways have touched the lowest ebb nowadays. They, therefore, consider it expedient to urge upon the Ministry that the qualifying marks in the written examination at least for safety related posts be invariably enhanced to 50% in case of general candidates and 45% for all reserved candidates as per the recommendation of the Khanna Committee. They emphasize that such an important aspect of safety of passengers and Railways should not be compromised with.

8. The Committee note that the Railway Board have taken a number of steps to ensure transparency in the process of recruitment by RRBs. They certainly appreciate the initiatives taken by the Railway Recruitment Control Board in this regard. However, the Committee think that still a lot is required to be done at the grass root level viz. examination centres. No doubt, Question Papers are opened in the presence of examiners and a certificate to this effect is obtained from them. Nevertheless, in order to ensure that the malpractices in the examination centres also do not take place, it is equally essential to enhance the surveillance, through the Vigilance Department of the Railways by conducting greater number of raids through the flying squads during the examinations. They also desire that the present system of ensuring transparency and impartiality be kept up.

New Delhi
30 January, 2004
10 Magha, 1925 (Saka)

K. YERRANNAIDU,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Railways

**MINUTES OF THE FIRST SITTING OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON
RAILWAYS (2004)**

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 14th January, 2004 from 1100 hours to 1315 hours in Committee Room 'E, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU - CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

1. Shri Avtar Singh Bhadana
2. Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi
3. Shri Anant Gudhe
4. Shri Salkhan Murmu
5. Shri Laxmanrao Patil
6. Shri Prabhat Samantaray
7. Shri Shashi Kumar
8. Smt. Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo
9. Shri Suresh Chandel

RAJYA SABHA

10. Shri Karnendu Bhattacharjee
11. Shri Nabam Rebia
12. Shri Abhay Kant Prasad
13. Shri Tarini Kanta Roy
14. Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma
15. Shri Abani Roy
16. Shri Harendra Singh Malik

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri V.S. Negi - Deputy Secretary
2. Smt. Abha Singh Yaduvanshi - Under Secretary

Representatives of the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board)

1. Shri R.K. Singh - Chairman, Railway Board & Ex-officio Principal Secretary to the Govt. of India.
2. Smt. Vijayalakshmi - Financial Commissioner (Railways) & Viswanathan Ex-officio Secretary to the Govt. of India.
3. Shri S.M. Singla - Member Staff & Ex-Officio Secretary to the Government of India

2. At the outset, the Chairman, welcomed the Members and congratulated them on their re-nomination to the Committee. He informed them that the Committee would like to examine the subject 'the Railway Recruitment Policy' on priority as the same has been a cause of concerns in some States. Accordingly, the representatives of the Ministry of Railways had been called to appear before the Committee to tender evidence in this regard.

3. Thereafter, the Committee took the evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Railways on the aforesaid subject and deliberated upon all the aspects of the subject in detail and concluded the evidence.

4. The verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

**MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (2004)**

The Committee sat on Friday, the 30th January, 2004 from 1530 hours to 1600 hours in Committee Room 'E', Parliament House Annexe,

PRESENT

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU - Chairman

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Dr. (Smt.) Anita Arya
3. Shri Ramdas Athawale
4. Shri M. Chinnasamy
5. Shri Moinul Hassan
6. Dr. Madan Prasad Jaiswal
7. Shri Salkhan Murmu
8. Shri Laxmanrao Patil
9. Shri Sohan Potai
10. Smt. Sushila Saroj
11. Dr. Nitish Sengupta
12. Shri Rajo Singh
13. Shri Suresh Chandel

RAJYA SABHA

14. Shri Karnendu Bhattacharjee
15. Shri Tarini Kanta Roy
16. Shri Abani Roy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri V.S. Negi - Deputy Secretary
2. Smt. Abha Singh Yaduvanshi - Under Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee. Thereafter, the Committee took up for consideration and adoption of the draft Reports on – (i) Resource Mobilisation (ii) Railway Recruitment Policy and (iii) Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in 13th Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2003-04) of the Ministry of Railways. The Chairman invited from the Members their suggestions if any, on the said draft Reports.

3. xx xx xx xx xx

4. Draft Report on 'Railway Recruitment Policy' was also adopted by the Committee after adding a sub-para as given in Annexure-I.

5. The Committee authorized the Chairman to finalise the Reports after making consequential changes, if any, arising out of the factual verification by the Ministry of Railways or otherwise and present the same to both the Houses of Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.