

FEDERATION OF RAILWAY OFFICERS' ASSOCIATIONS

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No. 2015/FROA/MS/1

Dated: 03.07.2015

Member Staff,
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Sub: Irregularities in induction of Group-'B' Railway Officers into Group-'A' Services

Ref: FROA's letter no. 2014/FROA/16 dated 27.10.2014

1. During last 10 years, the Group-'A' 'Promotion Quota' (PQ) of eight organized services have been revised upwards frequently as detailed below:

Year	JS/Group strength		
	Direct Recruitment	Promotion Quota	Total
Prior to 2005	540	180	720
2005	1018	255	1273
2006	955	318	1273
2007	1236	411	1647

2. Notings in relevant files of Estt. Directorate reveal that the above revisions have been done mostly at the behest of IRPOF, without any consultation with FROA. In all such decisions, views of functional Board Members, who are in charge of respective Cadres, have not been taken. Such increase in strength of JS/Group A (PQ) suffer from following infirmities-

- i) Raising the strength of Group 'A' Cadre in any grade has to be undertaken with the explicit approval of DOPT and Ministry of Finance which have not been taken in this case.

- ii) After Cadre Review of 2003-2007, there was no increase in Senior Duty Posts in any Group 'A' Cadre; in fact there was reduction in overall Cadre strength due to surrender of Senior Scale posts to achieve financial neutrality. Any increase in induction in recruitment grade without increase in the overall cadre strength should have been red-flagged, as this would lead to severe stagnation at mid-career level. No consultation were held with the stakeholders adversely affected, i.e., batches of direct recruit Group A Officers or their official representative Federation (i.e., FROA).
- iii) The Ministry of Finance's order for restricting recruitment to 1/3rd of vacancies was applied on Direct recruitment, but was not applied on Promotion Quota, without any such approval/clarification from MoF.
- iv) The "Reserves" was arbitrarily merged with regular posts citing unrelated provision of Indian Railway Establishment Code while DOPT categorically clarifies that Reserves *"are only temporary replacements for regular cadre officers who are currently away for one reason or the other and as such the reserve posts do not represent net additions to the cadre"*.
- v) DOPT vide OM No. AB.14017/2/1997-Estt(RR)/Pt. dated 19/01/2007 has directed all Ministries to implement the Judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court in CWP No. 5853 of 1997 decided on 18/12/198 (State of Punjab and others Vs Dr R.N. Bhatnagar & another) which directs to undertake recruitment on the basis of vacancies and not on a pre-fixed quota. But Railway Board did not take cognizance to this order of DOPT and the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court.


In view of the above infirmities, the upward revision in the strength of JS/Group A (PQ) is untenable. FROA requests that all promotion cases of Group 'B' officers to Group 'A' after 19/01/2007 should be reviewed in the light of above provisions.

3. Between 2004 and 2009, 1506 Group B officers have been inducted into Group 'A', whereas 589 Group 'A' officers have been recruited directly. Subsequently, total induction per annum has been as a rate of 824 officers per annum. Reckless and irrational recruitment of large batches of Group 'A' officers @824 officers per annum vis-à-vis a meager revenue cadre of 3234 posts in Senior Scale and above, has completely grid-locked the cadres of Group 'A' Railways. As a result, many Gr-'A' officers are languishing in JS, SS and JAG for years and have been running from pillar to post for promotions. Some have initiated legal proceedings also.

FROA requests that directly recruited Group 'A' officers be given time bound promotions as stipulated viz- SS in 4 years, JAG in 8 years and SG in 14 years.

4. FROA further requests that a rational policy of recruitment should be formed based on the total sanctioned Group A cadre strength and promotional avenues. Actual vacancies need to be calculated by Committee (which must include an Officer to be nominated by the cadre controlling Board Member) based on retirement, resignation etc and should not be left to the whims and fancies of Estt Directorate.
5. In addition to above, Railway Board has also started to grant unprecedented ante-dating of seniority of Group 'B' officers inducted to Group A by 5 years on notional basis by arbitrarily fixing a pay level of Rs.18950. This decision also does not have approval of DOPT and Ministry of Finance and arrived at arbitrarily. Hence FROA also requests the review of above provision also.

With warm regards.



(R. N. Singh)

Secretary General