

Government of India
Ministry of Railways
(Railway Board)

No.2009/Safety(A&R)/19/29

New Delhi, dated 22.04.2010

Chief Safety Officer
South Eastern Railway,
Kolkata

Sub: Use of Walkie-Talkie Sets.

**Ref: (1) Your letter No. 50/44/RB/pt.10. dated 29.03.2010.
(2) Board's letter of even number dated 10.03.2010.**

The queries raised in your letter under reference have been examined in Board's office. Following clarifications are advised:-

- (i) In suburban sections, generally there are more than two lines and number of trains within close vicinity of each other is very high. There could be as many as 15-20 trains within the range of a walkie-talkie set of a Guard. The use of walkie-talkie sets by the Guard of even one train may cause confusion to Loco Pilots of other trains following on the same line or running on adjacent lines leading to unsafe situations. It is for this reason that suburban sections have been excluded from the ambit of para (i) of letter dated 10.03.2010 mentioned at reference (2).

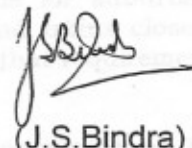
In Automatic territory other than suburban sections, whenever the train cannot move ahead and requires a relief engine, the Guard shall guide the crew of the relief engine to approach the stranded train. **For this purpose, he may use the walkie-talkie sets.**

- (ii) The first and second sentences in item (vi) of Board's letter dated 10.03.2010 are not contradictory. The first sentence lays down a general rule and second sentence specifies an exception to this rule when certain conditions are fulfilled i.e. action to be taken under exceptional circumstances. These exceptions and conditions where walkie-talkie sets can be used for exchange of signals between Loco Pilot and Guard have been mentioned.
- (iii) GR 4.35(1) requires that the Loco Pilot shall start his train from a station after receipt of authority to proceed and the Guard's signal to start. In conditions of poor visibility like fog and at curves or under other circumstances where physical exchange of all right signals between Guard and Loco Pilot is

not practically feasible, the exchange of signal has now been permitted over walkie-talkie sets vide para (vi) of letter dated 10.03.2010. It is not correct to infer that Guard's starting signal to Loco Pilot as per GR 4.35(1) has been dispensed with. As such, there is no violation of GR 4.35.

- (iv) Further, it is mentioned that CRS/NE Circle, in his preliminary report on rear end collision of 2964 Dn Mewar Express with 2779 Dn Goa Express on 21.10.2009 between Mathura Jn. and Vrindavan Road stations of North Central Railway, have recommended that "Guards of trains should be required to warn on VHF the crew of following train in Automatic Signalling Territory if their train has come to an out of course halt in Automatic Territory between two stations."

On perusing the matter at the initial stage Board (MT, ML & CRB) had opined that the same may be examined immediately by respective Directorate in consultation with NCR. Thereafter, the instructions dated 08.12.2009 and 10.03.2010 regarding use of walkie-talkie were issued with the approval of Board (MT).



(J.S. Bindra)
Joint Director/Safety
Railway Board

Copy together with the copy of South Eastern Railway's letter No.50/44/RB/Pt.10 dated 29.03.2010, to COMs of All Indian Railways – for information and necessary guidance.

कृपया जारी करें।
दीपचन्द
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रेल मन्त्रालय Ministry of Railways
सचिव Secretary
हस्ताक्षर Signature
दिनांक Date of Issue

SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

Office of the Chief Safety Officer,
Garden Reach, Kolkata - 43.

Dated: 29.03.2010.

No.50/44/RB/Pt.10.

✓ The Adviser (Safety),
Railway Board, New Delhi.

Sub:- Use of Walkie-Talkie Sets.

Ref:- Board's letter no. 2009/Safety(A&R)/19/29 dated 10.03.2010.

Board's letter under reference has been received and circulated to all concerned. As feedback received from various sources, doubts have been raised on a few points which are as follows:-

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- (i) Item no. (i) under third paragraph of the letter stipulates that when a train comes to a halt in a section of Automatic Signalling Territory and requires a relief engine, the train guard shall guide the crew of the relief engine when it is to come to pick up the train, **except in suburban sections**. However, it has not been mentioned as to whether the guard will guide the crew over walkie-talkie or otherwise. Secondly, it is not understood why exception has to be made for suburban sections. As the number of passenger trains are very high and trains closely follow each other in peak hours in suburban sections, it is felt that requirement of this clause is more in suburban section than in other sections.
- (ii) The first and second sentences in the Item no (vi) under third paragraph of the letter appears to be self-contradictory. Because the first sentence stipulates that walkie-talkie sets can not be used as an alternative for the physical exchange of signals whereas the second sentence practically makes it an alternative for the physical exchange of signals. Further, clause (a) of Item no (vi) mentions that walkie-talkie sets can be used to dispatch/start a train from the station dispensing the requirement of guard's starting signal to driver as envisaged in GR 4.35(1). Therefore, Board's instruction is likely to violate the provision of GR in this regard.
- (iii) Board's letter of even number dated 08.12.2009 on the subject which is superceded by the present letter, does mention that the instructions were issued examining the matter by Board (MT, ML & CRB). However, in the letter of even number dated 10.03.2009 which supercedes the earlier letter, it has not been mentioned whether modified instructions have been deliberated by Board(MT, ML & CRB) or not.

In the light of the above, it is felt by this Railway that walkie-talkie sets should not be related to the exchange of signals or starting signals. It should only be used as a medium of communication for sending emergent or potentially hazardous information when necessary.

It is therefore requested to examine the points and issue necessary clarification so that there will be no confusion in implementation of the instruction in the field.

Copy for information to:-

1) CSTE/COM/CEE/CME - S.E.Railway/GRC.

2) Commissioner of Railway Safety- S.E.Circle, 14, Strand Road, Kolkata - 1.

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Subhasis Ganguly
(Subhasis Ganguly)
Chief Safety Officer

29/03/2010