

Draft Policy on Pre-Cooked (Ready to Eat) meals

Sub: Request for remarks/comments on draft policy for introduction of Ready to Eat (RTE) meal in Railways.

In compliance of the Budget Announcement 2014-15, service of branded pre-cooked 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) meals is to be introduced on trains in order to further improve the quality, hygiene and also to provide variety to the passengers in on-board catering services.

In order to obtain the feedback/ response/suggestions of the passengers, trials were conducted by Zonal Railways/IRCTC for service of 'Ready to Eat' meals with reputed brands like M/s ITC, MTR, M/s Haldirams & Maiyas, M/s Kellogg's, M/s HUL, M/s Kohinoor Foods etc.

Zonal Railways/IRCTC have forwarded suggestions/feedback of the passengers during these trials. Further, to examine the response of the passengers and outcome of the trials, a meetings was held in Board's office with Northern Railway and IRCTC wherein the representatives of the reputed brands of 'Ready to Eat' like M/s ITC, MTR, M/s Haldirams & Maiyas also participated.

The representatives of M/s ITC, MTR, Maiyas, Kohinoor Foods, Kellogg's, Gitawako, Flower Valley also gave presentation to Member Traffic, Railway Board on 23.09.2014 regarding their products. It was decided that a draft policy guidelines will be formulated and uploaded in the website of the Indian Railways so that all the stake holders can see and send suggestions for final policy.

During the above meetings, the modalities for implementation of service of 'Ready to Eat' meals were discussed and accordingly, a draft policy has been formulated and uploaded for inviting suggestions/comments in 15 days. The suggestion/comments can be sent to **Director (T&C), Room No. 503, Railway Board, New Delhi** and also on the email- **ccmc508@gmail.com**. Telephone Nos- 011-23384922 and mobile No. 9901484466.

(K P Yadav)
Director (Tourism & Catering)
Railway Board

Draft Policy on Pre-Cooked (Ready to Eat) meals

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
RAILWAY BOARD**

No. 2014/TG-III/631/2

New Delhi, Dated: .09.2014

The Chief Commercial Managers,
All Indian Railways.

The Chairman and Managing Director,
IRCTC, New Delhi.

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Sub: Service of branded Ready to Eat (RTE) meals on Trains.

In compliance of the Budget Announcement 2014-15, service of branded pre-cooked 'Ready to Eat' meals is to be introduced on trains in order to further improve the quality, hygiene and also to provide variety to the passengers in on-board catering services. Following policy guidelines are issued.

1. Introduction of 'Ready to Eat' meals :

- 1.1 In the first phase, service of branded pre-cooked 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) meals is to be introduced on all Mail/Express Trains having Pantry Cars as an 'add on' option under the category of a-la-carte to the passengers in addition to other standard items as the catering services on these trains are provided to passengers on option and payment basis.
- 1.2 The licensees of the Pantry Cars shall ensure availability of the items of branded 'Ready to Eat' and mandatorily provide an option to the passengers as it is part of the a-la-carte items recommended by the committee for a-la-carte items.

2. Shortlisting of 'Ready to Eat' brands :

- 2.1 Zonal Railway will select the brands/firms/company of reputed and branded 'Ready to Eat' items so as to provide variety, quality, hygiene and affordable choices to the passengers.
- 2.2 Approval/shortlisting of brands/firms/company is to be done by Zonal Railway through Expression of Interest (EOI) to ensure participation of reputed firms having national and/or international presence having wide range of RTE products.
- 2.3 A panel of shortlisted reputed brands/firms/company of 'Ready to Eat' must be finalized by zonal railways through a 3 member committee of JA/SG officers from Commercial, Stores & Finance department to be nominated by the PHOD/CHOD of the respective department. The criteria for shortlisting must ensure only reputed brands are selected.
- 2.4 Brands/firms/company of the 'Ready to Eat' items shall be approved by the CCMs of the Zonal Railway.

- 2.5 The panel will have the validity for three years extendable for further two years subject to the satisfactory performance of the brands which includes no serious complaints and subject to validity of necessary certificates with regard to food safety standards & food manufacturing standards under FSSAI. Brands should comply with the technical quality that meets National/International Standards like ISO 22000, HACCP, BRC.
- 2.6 It must be ensured that the selected firms comply with the statutory criteria like PAN, Service Tax registration, Food license/PFA license, registration/incorporation of the firm, etc.
- 2.7 A list of firms which have been received in the Board for sale of 'Ready to Eat' meals is enclosed for information. Zonal Railways may consider these firms also at the time of shortlisting subject to their fulfilling the selection/shortlisting criteria.

3. Eligibility Criteria for shortlisting of Brands of Ready to Eat meals

- 3.1 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) Brands/firms/company must comply with the technical quality that meets National/International Standards like ISO 22000, HACCP, BRC and possess these quality certificates.
- 3.2 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) Brands/firms/company must be duly licensed under FSSAI in compliance to their rules and regulations. Raw materials used should be of quality in compliance to FSSAI standards. The final product shall be in compliance to FSSAI standards. It must have valid necessary certificates with regard to food safety standards & food manufacturing standards under FSSAI norms.
- 3.3 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) Brands/firms/company must have availability of retort packaging system for shelf life of minimum 3 months which must comply with the national and international norms and standards. Certificates in this regard must be submitted by the Ready to Eat manufacturers. The retort pouch should have a layer laminate with aluminium foil pouch with lox having air and moisture barrier or in retortable casing with clip from both sides.
- 3.4 RTE food should have been tested periodically by NABL accredited laboratory for which the report shall be in compliance with FSSAI standards. The non vegetarian items shall be supplied by companies having MFPO category A license converted to FSSAI license wherein with manufacturing.
- 3.5 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) Brands/firms/company should have prominent presence in the Indian markets/or and abroad with FSSAI. It must be available for sale in reputed shops/Super Bazaar / outlets/stores in cities across the country.
- 3.6 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) Brands/firms/company must have experience of a minimum of 3 years in its own catering business.
- 3.7 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) Brands/firms/company must have an average annual turnover of not less than 50 lakhs for each of the last 3 preceding years.
- 3.8 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) Brands/firms/company must have an average annual financial standing of atleast 50 lakhs during the last 3 preceding years.

4. Availability of branded 'Ready to Eat' food items on trains

4.1 Licensee of the pantry cars shall ensure that only the items of all shortlisted brands of 'Ready to Eat' approved by the zonal railways are available in the pantry car and are accordingly served to the passengers on option and payment basis.

5. Menu & Tariff of Ready to Eat items

5.1 The firms, so approved by railways for supplying items of 'Ready to Eat', shall design economic and customised sachets of the food items as notified in a-la-carte.

5.2 The firm should supply a combo meal of 400gms (Rice 200gms/250gms + Curry 200gms/150gms) both veg. and non-veg. apart from other RTE food items at a price range of a-la-carte items already notified and copy has been supplied to them.

5.3 The list of items, with quantity and rates, which are supposed to be made available to the passengers are to be approved by the CCMs of the Zonal Railways prior to its introduction.

5.4 The Ready to Eat items shall be sold on MRP. The MRP will be approved and notified by the CCMs of the zonal railways. The MRP shall be inclusive of all taxes (VAT, Service Tax, GST as legislated & notified), License Fee (if any), vendor's commission (if any), other overhead cost of packaging, service of tray, spoon, napkin etc. The MRP should be printed on the 'Ready to Eat' packets.

5.5 The licensee shall be responsible for payment of all applicable taxes notified by the government from time to time to the authorised bodies.

5.6 Menu cards available with the waiters must indicate the name of the 'Ready to Eat' items, its brands, weight and rates for the information of the passengers.

5.7 Publicity for availability of 'Ready to Eat' items in the pantry Cars as an added choice to the passengers be ensured by the zonal railways and the licensees.

5.8 In order to ensure the availability of 'Ready to Eat' food items on trains, the firms/company/brands, approved by railways, may have tie-up with the licensees appointed by railways for supply, rates, commission, co-branding, logistics of 'Ready to Eat' products.

6. Presentation of 'Ready to Eat' meals

6.1 'Ready to Eat' food items are to be served in sealed packed conditions to the passengers so as to ensure that no adulteration and contamination of the products. The licensees shall ensure that 'Ready to Eat' items are served in a manner that the passenger can empty the sachets and eat it readily.

6.2 The sachets/combo tray sets/pouch/retorts will be opened by the passengers. The licensee will ensure supply of heated sachets alongwith necessary disposable tray/plate/ spoon/napkin etc. which are to be used by the passengers for eating. The licensee shall also arrange scissors (if required) for cutting the sachets.

7. License Fee

7.1 Since the scheme is to be implemented on trains with pantry cars for which licence fee has already been fixed after assessment of sales and has been realized and that it is another option to the existing a-la-carte item, no

additional licence fee on account of sale of pre cooked 'Ready to Eat' meals/food items will be realized by the zonal railways from the licensee.

- 7.2 Sale of pre-cooked food will be another option to the existing a la carte items, since no additional License Fee will be charged. Railways will act as a facilitator for provision of such ready to eat meals on trains in order to give choice, variety, quality and hygiene.

8. General Instructions

- 8.1 Railway will provide adequate equipment like hot cases, oven, heating equipment in the Pantry Cars for ensuring heating of sachet/combo tray sets/pouch/retort etc. for service to the passengers.
- 8.2 Zonal Railways will conduct regular checks/inspection of trains to ensure availability of Ready to Eat items as an 'add on' option to the passengers. Zonal Railways are to ensure that the licensees are mandatorily providing the option of branded and approved 'Ready to Eat' items to the passengers in addition to other standard items. It must also be ensured that the brands of meals/food items its quality, quantity, rates, hygiene etc. are properly maintained while serving these items to the passengers.
- 8.3 In case the branded 'Ready to Eat' food items are not available on trains for sale, it will be treated as deficiency in service for which penalty will be imposed on licensees of the pantry car.
- 8.4 After the launch, CCMs to undertake a drive on the trains for ensuring the availability of branded and approved 'Ready to Eat' items to the passengers on trains.
- 8.5 Passenger feedback and opinion shall be obtained regularly and should also be a part of the drives by Zonal Railways. The feedback so obtained be analysed and suggestions implemented. A report may also be sent to Board.
- 8.6 After the launch of the ready to eat meals on trains, **media campaign** by CPRO of the concerned zonal railways be initiated so as to create awareness and to popularize the pre cooked ready to eat food being served in the trains.
- 9.** CCMs of the zonal railways may ensure that the shortlisting of brands is done within **one month (by 31st October 2014)** and the 'Ready to Eat' choice is made available for sale latest by **15th November 2014**. These instructions shall come into force with immediate effect.

This issues with the concurrence of Finance Directorate of Ministry of Railways.

Kindly acknowledged the Receipt of this letter.

(K.P.Yadav)
Director (Tourism & Catering)
Railway Board

No. 2014/TG-III/631/2

New Delhi, Dated: .09.2014

Copy to: FA&CAO, All Indian Railways, for information & necessary action.

For Financial Commissioner, Railway Board