

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA / BHARAT SARKAR
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS / RAIL MANTRALAYA
(RAILWAY BOARD)**

No.2006/TG.III/645/4

dated 28.7.2006

General Managers / All Indian Railways

Managing Director / IRCTC

(Commercial Circular No. 63 of 2006)

Sub: On-board services

Ref: Board's letter of even number dated 28.4.2006

Hon'ble M.R's announcement in the Budget Speech 2006-07 is reiterated as follows:

"Para:49 IRCTC has been entrusted with the entire responsibility of providing all passenger amenities in Mail and Express passenger trains. Corporation will award licence through open bidding to provide all services including catering, bedroll and cleanliness of trains and toilets. These services will also be made available on such Mail and Express trains, which do not have a pantry car. Feedback forms taken from passengers will be monitored through a computerized system and all possible efforts would be made to improve services based on these suggestions. All these activities will be started on a few trains as a pilot project. On successful implementation, it would be extended to other trains."

Hon'be MR has now desired that budget announcements concerning train side vending and integrated on-board services should be implemented on all important trains during the year. In order to implement the scheme on all the trains, following issues need to be resolved quickly:

- (i) Provision of infrastructure at the stations for cleaning and storage of linen.
- (ii) Ensuring quality of cleanliness.
- (iii) Selection process for franchisee for provision of bedrolls.
- (iv) Phase-wise change over / switching over so that all trains are provided with integrated on-board services.

1. Provision of infrastructure at the stations for cleaning and storage of linen:

- 1.1 Policy guidelines already exist to provide mechanized laundry on Railway land. Wherever such launderettes are provided, e.g., on N.R. and NER, these are working satisfactorily. The same system should be proliferated at all the stations from where more than 500 sets of bed sheets or linen are supplied every day. Such launderettes should be provided on B.O.T. basis for 10 years. For launderettes, nominal land licence fee @ Rs.1/- per sq. ft. per annum should be charged.
- 1.2 All linen should be procured by IRCTC or its franchisee.
- 1.3 Near the washing line an area should be earmarked for storage of bedrolls. All unwashed linen should be received in this depot and picked up by the laundry contractors. After washing, linen should be stacked here. The depot should be run by IRCTC or its franchisee on B.O.T. basis. Nominal land licence fee @ Rs.1/- per sq. ft. per annum should be charged for the bedroll depots.

- 1.4 Thus, in a nutshell, IRCTC through its franchisee will procure the linen, store the linen, get it cleaned by mechanized laundrettes and make it available for supply on the train.

2. Ensuring quality of cleanliness:

- 2.1 For ensuring the quality of cleanliness, staff of IRCTC should continuously monitor all linen at the procurement stage, cleaning stage and finally when it is made available for loading onto the train in the linen depot near the washing line. Further, when the linen is supplied on the train, passengers' reaction should be taken on the integrated feedback form meant for complete on-board services.

3. Selection process of franchisees for provision of bedrolls:-

- 3.1 Policy guidelines already exist for franchising contracts for washing of bedrolls by mechanized process. The contractor should be paid a reasonable amount for washing so that he does not compromise on the quality of washing. Thus, in evaluating the tender, reasonableness of rates should always be examined and if the prospective contractor has quoted unworkably low rates, the same may not be considered.

4. Phase-wise change over / switching over for all trains to provide integrated on-board services:

- 4.1 Instructions have been issued by Board for provision of integrated on-board services on all Mail/Express, superfast trains whether with pantry or without pantry car. Approx 232 trains have pantry cars and 468 trains are without pantry cars. It will be prudent that the scope of the existing contract is enhanced to include distribution of bedrolls also in addition to catering. The linen will be supplied by IRCTC or its franchisee who will procure, wash the linen and store it in the bedroll depot. A suitable mechanism should be evolved between IRCTC and its licensee for this purpose.
- 4.2 Further, for cleaning of coaches, per coach charges have been fixed and the same will be reimbursed to IRCTC. Detailed instructions have been issued vide Board's letter No. 2006/TG-III/645/6 dated 27.7.2006.

5. Improvement in Catering Services:

- 5.1 Presently, the catering contractor prepares the food in his premises for supply on the trains. After preparation of meals he loads the same on the trains. In many cases, sub-contracts are given by the catering contractor to those sub contractors who do not observe proper hygiene and cooking is done in unhygienic condition. The quality of food is putrid and there is no consistency in quality or quantity. It has been noticed that monitoring mechanism or penal action against the catering contractors is inadequate.
- 5.2 When Rajdhani / Shatabdi Express trains were introduced by Railways, an effort was made to create state-of-art base kitchens for serving food which is hot, wholesome and of consistent quality. In these base kitchens, food hygiene is properly followed and specific

measures are taken to introduce systems so that 'TQM' is maintained and better food, both quantitatively and qualitatively is served to the passengers.

- 5.3 Thus, it will be in the fitness of things to set up base kitchens in the Yards or near the washing lines or at any suitable place within the city on Railway land. These base kitchens should be of state-of-art technology and based on 'PPP' model by the private franchisee. IRCTC will set up these base kitchens. Further, for serving meals on 468 trains, which are without pantry cars, standardized meals can be provided by these base kitchens. Furthermore, those trains, which have pantry cars and where there is heavy demand, can also be taken up for supply from these standardized base kitchens. Since platforms at important stations are required to be made 'cooking free' these base kitchens can provide fast food, snack and other items for sale at the platforms also. This approach will completely modernize catering services and achieve the desired result as desired by Hon'ble M.R. Since prices of all food whether sold on trains or on Rajdhani / Shatabdi Express trains is controlled by Ministry of Railways to keep it within the affordable limit for the common man, it will reduce the cost of provision of catering services.
- 5.4 The base kitchen infrastructure will be supported by Indian Railways inasmuch the land for base kitchens will be provided to IRCTC at a nominal land licence fee of Rs.1/- per sq. ft. per annum for the entire base kitchen. Further, electricity, water and drainage to the base kitchen should also be provided by the Railways. For electricity and water, the cost incurred by Railways per unit will be paid for by the franchisee based on 'PPP' model.
- 5.5 A transit depot should be developed near the washing line or in one of the rooms in washing line, where the food can be kept prior to loading. Food will be loaded directly onto the train in the washing line itself. Loading of linen and food in the washing line where the train is being maintained will completely eliminate the commotion and inconvenience to the passengers on the platforms.
- 5.6 Way Leave Charges for base kitchens and launderettes should not be charged.

6. Other components of On-board services:

- 6.1 Other components of on-board services such as provision of toilet soap, fresh towel, freshener, air purifier, liquid soap enroute, travel guide facility and the system of taking feedback from the passengers should be done by the service provider in lieu of granting permission to sell tooth brush, tooth paste, soap etc., sale of OTC (Over the Counter) drugs and locks, chains, pre-paid cell phone cards.
- 6.2 Bedroll charges are already fixed @ Rs.25/-. IRCTC will be paid Rs.25/- per bedroll by IR for bed roll supplied to passengers.

6.3 Per unit cost for cleaning of coaches as decided by Railway Board will be paid to IRCTC (Board's letter no. 2006/TG-III/645/6 dated 27.7.2006).

7. For all future contracts, there will be one comprehensive on-board contract for the trains.
8. Over a period of six months, the bedroll contracts should be handed over to IRCTC in a phased manner so that integration is achieved by IRCTC for complete on-board services. Further, IRCTC should also set up mechanized laundrettes and modern base kitchens on the land provided by the Railways to support and improve ON-BOARD SERVICES.
9. This issues with the concurrence of Finance Directorate of Railway Board.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter.


(Biplav Kumar)
Director (Tourism & Catering)
Railway Board

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2. ADAI / Railways (with 36 spare copies).


For Financial Commissioner / Railways

Copy to Chief Commercial Managers, All Indian Railways.