

**The Member Staff,
Railway Board,
New Delhi.**

Sir,

Sub: Cadre Review of Group 'A' Railway Services.

FROA has already requested Board to expedite the process of cadre review for Group 'A' Railway Services considering stagnation and poor promotional prospects of Railway Officers vis-à-vis other services. In this context FROA would like to submit following details and suggestions about this exercise.

1. The cadres of IRSME and IRSEE were last reviewed in 2003. Subsequently the cadres of other Group 'A' Railway Services were reviewed. While accepting the Report of 6th Central Pay Commission, the Central Government vide Finance Ministry's Resolution No.1/1/2008-IC dated 20.9.2008, para 1(ix), has decided that cadre review of central Group 'A' services will be brought upto date in a year. Accordingly DOPT has advised all cadre controlling Ministries including the Ministry of Railways vide OM No.I-11019/6/2008/CRD dated 5.9.2008 to submit proposals of cadre review. The process of cadre review has not yet started at Railway Board. The guiding principles of the cadre review have not also been decided by Board.

2. **Salient features of the last review and their consequences:**

2.1 The 5th CPC provided the following guidance to the cadre controlling authorities in "their quest for an ideal structure".

Scale	% of Sr. duty post	Mandatory eligibility for grant of grade
HAG	3%	25 th Year
SAG	17%	17 th Year
JAG/SG	50%	9 th Year/14 th Year
Sr. Scale	30%	5 th Year

However, there was a huge mismatch between the percentage norm and threshold norm as it was not feasible to grant HAG to officers after 25 years of service with only 3% posts.

2.2 But the Ministry of Railways did not appropriately deliberate the consequences of the recommendations of the 5th CPC and instead suo-motu increased the threshold for administrative grades with the following limits only to meet the percentage norm.

HAG - 31+ years
SAG - 18+ years
JAG - 9+ years

2.3 For example the post restructuring cadre of IRSME circulated by Board's letter No.2000E(GC)12-47(IRSME) (236) dated 19.12.2003 indicates the following:

Grade	Number of Posts	Percentage of total
HAG	25	3.0%
SAG	139	16.7%
SG/JAG	413	49.5%
SS	257	30.8%
Total	834	100%

2.4 Thus the restructuring exercises of 2003 only confirmed to the percentage norms of 5th CPC but missed the threshold norms prescribed by it by a wide margin. As a result, the cadre review of 2003 has put the Railway Services in great disadvantage vis-à-vis the other Central Group 'A' Services and All India Services.

2.5 Vide DOPT's letter No.20011/4/92-AIS-II dated 28.3.2000 addressed to the State Governments, a threshold of 16 years of services for promotion to SAG and 25 years of services for promotion to HAG in States have been advised. In contrast, Railway officers with 32+ years are now waiting for promotion to HAG. Promotion to SAG takes 20-22 years of service in the cadre. The problem would have been much worse and acute had the Railways not created few more work charged posts in SAG and HAG during the last 5 years. Thus the cadre review of 2003 has failed to meet the aspirations of Railway officers vis-à-vis other Central Services.

3. **Situation arising out of 6th CPC**

3.1 The 6th CPC has refrained from making any advice for cadre review. However, it has recommended a two year edge to IAS vis-à-vis Central Services (para 3.3.12).

3.2 The Cabinet decisions on 6th CPC have resulted in significant upgradation of higher level posts in various services. For example:

(a) For IPS, 1 DGP in each state has been placed at Apex level (Rs.80,000/- fixed)

(b) For Indian Forest Service, 1 post of PCCF in each state has been placed at Apex level

(c) For Revenue Services the members of both CBDT as well as CBEC have been placed at Apex level while their rank continues to be of "Special Secretary".

The above decisions and the consequent cadre reviews in these services which will follow, will definitely put these services at greater advantage vis-à-vis Railway Services.

4 **Suggestions of FROA for cadre review for Railway Services in 2009.**

FROA requests Board to consider the following guidelines for the cadre review of Railway Services in 2009.

4.1 Instead of going by percentage norms, the cadre review should be based on years of service and ensure that promotion to the higher grades are achieved with the following threshold limits.

Grade	Threshold years for IAS officers in States	Proposed threshold years for Railway Services
SAG	16	18
HAG	25	27
HAG+	-	33
Apex	30	-

The 6th CPC's recommendation of edge of 2 years to IAS officers at "Centre" does not have direct application in Railway Services as most Railway officers are not placed at "Centre" (i.e. Ministry of Railways - Railway Board") but work at "Zonal Railways" which have their equivalence to "States" both in legal and functional terms. Thus comparison of Railway Service Officers should be with All India Service Officers of States. A threshold has been suggested for promotion to HAG+ as it may not be feasible to suggest a length of service for Apex level for Railways.

4.2 In order to achieve the above threshold years the current cadre review of Railway Services will also have to restructure the ex-cadre posts of ADRMs, DRMs, SDGMs, DGMs, AGMs, GMs etc. The cadre review in any way cannot meet a logical threshold unless the posts of DRMs are upgraded to HAG and those of GMs are upgraded to the Apex level. Upgradation will not possibly disturb the age limit for DRMs as a threshold of 27 years is being suggested for HAG.

4.3 Few select posts in Divisions may be upgraded to SAG and few select posts at Zonal level may be upgraded to HAG+.

4.4 In view of expansion of Railway activities and strengthening of Railway finances, the Finance Ministry's norm of 1999 for matching savings in cadre review should be dispensed with by taking up the issue with the Cabinet in a separate proposal.

The community of Railway officers will be thankful to Board, if early action is taken in this regard.

(G.N. Asthana)
President/FROA