SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

RATIONALISED OFFICE PROCEDURES TO ACCOMPLISH IMPROVED WORK CULTURE

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0. Preamble

0.1 Good office procedures explained here, are only a lucid reinstatement of the old practices which have gone into disuse and these do not constitute any innovation or new system of working. However some new instructions have been added to meet the present days' needs.

0.2 The job of a Clerk or a Draftsman calls for intelligent application of mind, supported by the knowledge of rules, regulations and technical aspects of the stream he belongs to. It is necessary to enrich the job contents of these cadres and to harness the individual talents. This can be achieved only by distributing responsibility equitably, so that every employee feels that he is a part of the organisation and his role is important. Self- confidence thus created in individuals ultimately leads to the strength of the organisation. Streamlining of the office procedures as per this circular will pinpoint accountability and responsibility at various levels and will promote individual efficiency thereby leading to collective efficiency.

0.3 In this circular, the term "Top Officer" has been used to denote the head of the office/organisation and the term "Branch Officers" to represent the officers in the next lower tier with different portfolios. But this definition of a "Top Officer" is not rigid. Where a lower officer is entirely competent to take decision in a particular issue, he can be considered as "Top Officer" for the limited purpose.

1. Every staff in Clerical, Computer, Drawing and Typing sections should display his/her name (painted on a wooden block of triangular cross section kept on the table or through other suitable means).

2. Every Office Superintendent, Clerk and Draftsman should have a distinct designation within the Department. For example, OS/4 indicates Office Superintendent of Section 4. SCK/3/4 will indicate that he is the third Senior Clerk working in Section 4. Still better, the abbreviations of functions can be used instead of numbers.

3. Each initials made by an Office Superintendent/Clerk/Draftsman in any paper should be followed by his designation as defined in Para 2 along with the date. (Bare initials cannot reveal the identity of the owner of the initials. Date is considered inseparable part of initials/full signature).

4. On the cover of each file, the name of the dealing Clerk and the OS along with their designations should be written legibly in bold capital letters.

5. The Officers should not hesitate to call the dealing Clerks (not necessarily the OS always) to discuss about the notings/letters put up by them. This will help to build up self-confidence, boost up morale and stimulate interest amongst the Clerks. It will be also possible to gauge whether the OS guides the Clerks properly.

6. Each Typist/Stenographer/PA/Computer Operator should have a distinct nickname, such as VNS, Hari, Minu etc. No two persons in the office should have the same nickname. Every letter/matter typed, should have the originator's nickname with date at the end, at left side bottom corner, such as TVK/9.8.94 or TVK090894. If the letter/matter is prepared on a computer, the file name and floppy/pen drive/ other location reference should also be incorporated following the nickname and date, all in small font.

7. The nickname of the Typist should be available even for stencil cutting. In case voluminous typing/stencil cutting is divided among various Typists, each page must have the nickname of the Typist who typed that particular page. The identity methods as per Para 6 and 7 will assure

recognition to good performers, even from the head of the office and this will inspire others too.

8. When the typing of a report is shared among more than one employee, same font, margin details, etc. should be used so that the letters are uniform in all the pages.

9. Each dealer/typist/draftsman should log his daily work in a diary. These diaries should be scrutinised by OS and officers periodically.

10. **Size of the Papers to be used**

10.1 Only A4 size papers (210 mm x 297 mm) should be used for making office notes, letters, etc. so that these can file up in a uniform way in the folder which are designed only for A4 size. Big statements can be of A3 size which is folded to A4 size by a mid-fold; a second fold parallel to the first fold is necessary to keep the edge of paper free of file holes. If papers of different sizes are filed, not only these give uncouth appearance, but also the portions exceeding A4 size get folded and torn off, resulting in loss of valuable information.

10.2 All letter heads should be strictly of A4 size, so that the annexed sheets match in size. The logo should not be located in the left top corner of the letter head to avoid pinning or stapling on the logo amounting to insult for the same. Top centre of letter head is the most suitable location for logo.

10.3 It is a bad practice to file letters/statements printed on computer stationery without chopping off perforated edges. All offices should use perforated roll-sheets of width 240 mm or 450 mm (approx.), so that either A4 or A3 dimension is obtained after removal of perforated portions.

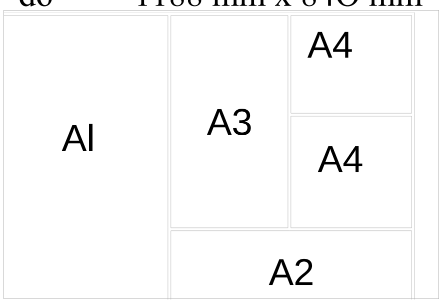
10.4 Most of the papers and letter heads supplied by Stores Department are of A4 size. But some offices go in for procurement/local purchase of foolscap or legal size papers for photocopy machines; letter heads of odd sizes are got printed through non-railway sources. Such practices should be stopped. If some supply of paper is not of A4 size, it is the responsibility of the OS/Head Clerk concerned to get them cut to A4 size and then use them. For example, foolscap size is 210mm x 357 mm. To bring it to 210 mm x 297 mm size, 60 mm wide strip can be cut off and used for various purposes.

10.5 While filing A4 size papers, standard punching machine should be used to punch the holes (at 8 cm c/c) symmetrical to the horizontal centre-line of the paper, with constant edge distance, so that all the papers get neatly aligned while being filed.

10.6 The logic behind A0, Al, A2, A3 and A4 sizes (metric sizes) is explained below.

A4 size is	297 mm x 210 mm
A3 -do-	420 mm x 297 mm
A2 -do-	594 mm x 42O mm
Al -do-	840 mm x 594 mm
A0 -do-	1188 mm x 84O mm

840mm



1188mm / A0 size

Thus by folding A0 into two equal halves, we get Al . By folding Al we get A2 and so on. This is indicated in the figure.

10.7 In all these sizes, the length : width ratio is √2:1 (i.e 1.414:1 or 1:0.707). Therefore, enlargement/reduction by photocopy process will exactly fit in whether A4 to A3, Al to A2, etc. International, as well as ISI standards, require adoption of metric size papers.

10.8 There is a tendency to use A4 size paper in Portrait Mode for the covering letter and in Landscape Mode for the tabular statements annexed. Such a bunch of papers cannot be filed neat. Earnest attempt should be made to make statements also in Portrait Mode. This task is quite easy with computers being used, by adjusting width-height ratio of font used. If this is not possible, the statements must be in A3 size in Landscape Mode and should be folded to A4 size.

11. **Routing of the letters received**

11.1 Letters received in an office/department should be expeditiously 'pushed' forward by the Receiving Section. The Receipt Clerk should make an entry in the Receipt Register and mark a Serial Number with date of receipt on each letter received. Dated rubber stamp should invariably be used, so that the date of receipt is clearly visible. Serial numbering using a machine is a good practice. The Receiving Section will also superscribe important/urgent letters in red such as "Urgent", "MP's reference", "To be replied before …" etc. to highlight the speed of disposal required. Also impression should be made on each letter received, using a rubber stamp to provide space for entering "Back reference" and "Forward reference" (BR and FR), which will be subsequently entered by the dealing clerk as mentioned in Para 16.5. After making the entry in the Receipt Register, the letter should be marked by the Office Superintendent/Clerk of the Receiving Section to the officers concerned in the hierarchy up to the terminating section. For example, a letter received from Headquarters/State Government on a subject of land at a particular station should be marked to Sr.DEN/Coordination, DEN (concerned) and Land Section. The marking should be in <u>red</u> and should be logged towards the right hand side of the letter. Marking in the margin area should be avoided in order to ensure immediate visibility even after the letter is filed. In case a letter has more than one page, the marking should be on the top page only. It is a bad practice to make markings or to give BR/FR entries in the last page of the letter.

11.2 In case the first officer decides that the letter should be seen by any officer/section, not in the marking list, he should include the same.

11.3. If the letter deserves to be acted upon by more than one section, photocopies should be taken and marked to such sections. For example, a public complaint should go to the Grievance Cell through ADRM and also to the Branch Officers concerned, such as DCM, DEN. For such a situation, photocopies should be resorted to.

11.4 The first officer should also see whether the routing of the marking made by Receiving Section is correct. Otherwise, he must change the whole routing.

11.5 Sometimes, a Branch Officer may receive an important letter from the Head of his Department in Corporate Office, which deserves to be brought to the attention of the Top Officer controlling the Branch Officer. In fact such a situation should not arise if the Corporate Office is alert (as envisaged in Para 20.1). Still such slips do take place. For example, important instructions on waival of wharfage and demurrage charges may be issued by CCM to Sr. DCMs without copies to DRMs. Important verdict of Hon'ble CAT may be circulated by CPO to Sr. DPOs, without appraising DRMs by copies. Vital directives on land utilisation may be issued by the Railway Board to Chief Engineers, without endorsing copies to GMs. In such cases, the Branch Officer should send a copy of the letter for the information of the top officer, whose guidance should also be taken while taking action on the letter and for replying the letter.

11.6 Sometimes a report may be received under a covering letter. An officer seeing it in Dak Pad may detach the report for studying and may pass on the covering letter forward. In such a case, he should make an endorsement on the covering letter to the effect that the report is kept with him. Likewise, the drawings enclosed to a letter received, may be detached and kept in the drawing cabinet/file in which case an endorsement should be made suitably to pinpoint the location of drawing when needed.

11.7 It is OS's responsibility to ensure that Dak Pads are not stagnant due to Officers going on leave/tour. He should bring to the attention of other Officers any important letter awaiting urgent action.

11.8 The Office Superintendent/Clerk of the Receiving Section who marks the letters should therefore, have a sound overall knowledge of the functions of the office, to ensure that the papers reach the right officials in a fast manner. When urgency and priority warrant, he should walk to the Officer concerned with the letter or fax or telegram and seek his advice for immediate disposal. Only such involvement will indicate that the OS is dedicated to the corporate objectives. In addition, the Top Officer should note down in his personal diary the details of important letters received which required prompt reply/action and he must repeatedly check on the same, without entirely leaving the matter to OS or Clerks.

12. Sometimes more than one letter may be received in one envelope from the same source. The Receiving Section should carefully separate them and treat them individually, by marking to the respective Officers and Sections.

13. Except in obvious or routine cases, the line of action to be taken should be indicated by the Officer in order to guide the Officers/Staff below. Endorsement by the Officer should not be in the margin on filing side. If this discipline is not followed, it will be difficult to see the endorsement after filing the letter. In case the lower official needs guidance, there should not

be hesitation to consult the higher official directly. It is a crime to keep any letter without taking action, not knowing what to do. Officers and OSs should go round in the Section and take up with Clerks keeping too many loose letters without filing and processing.

14. Important letters needing urgent action and letters on policy matters should not be kept in circulation on Dak Pad. The original should go to the file immediately and only the photocopy should be circulated. It is the Officer's responsibility to ensure this. This has been reiterated in Para 18.

15. Routing of the letter within the office and recording of orders on the action to be taken are very important facets of office working. To quote a specific case, an important letter on ultrasonic testing of rails sent by PCE and received by a Sr. DEN, was not circulated to other DENs, AENs and Supervisors of the Division, because of the simple reason that the Sr. DEN did not endorse "Circulate to all concerned" on the letter and the OS did not visualise the importance of the subject for ensuring safety.

16. **Good practices in filing papers**

16.1 The filing procedures should facilitate easy retrieval of information, apart from eliminating possibility of manipulations at a later date (In a particular case, which became a court case subsequently, the investigation revealed that some vital letters had been replaced by fake correspondence).

16.2 Double side files should invariably be adopted, with Folio side (correspondence side) and noting side (pp side), so that the internal discussion and rationale for decisions are kept on record.

16.3 **Assigning Folio Number**

Folio number should be written in red and rounded at right side top corner. In case a letter has more than one sheet, individual folio numbers should be given to each sheet in the following manner:-

Suppose the letter has 14 sheets (inclusive of covering letter and annexures) and has to be filed over Folio No. 72, then the topmost sheet should be marked 73/1-14. The second sheet should be marked 73/2-14, third sheet 73/3-14, etc. till the last sheet is marked 73/14-14. It is a bad practice to give folio numbers as 73 to 86 for the papers being filed in this case.

16.4 **<u>Docketing of a letter kept on Folio side, on the PP side</u>**

The docketing of each letter (on Folio side) received and despatched should be done <u>in red</u> on the PP side by writing the Folio Number, originator and addressee of the letter, Reference Number of the letter, date of filing, brief description of the subject and reproduction of the endorsement recorded by the Officer, when it was put up to him in Dak Pad, as mentioned in Para 13. An example is given below:

"Folio-51/1-3:- From GM/W/SC to all DRM/Ws

Ref. No. W.57 ………………….Dated ……………

Date of filing:

Sub: Licensing of land for shops inside Railway Colony —
Emphasis on the ban already imposed.

Sr. DEN's endorsement: "Notify All AENs"

Some offices adopt the practice of earmarking sheets on PP side exclusively for docketing. This is not a good practice. The docketing should be done along with other notings on PP side in chronological order. This will authenticate the date of filing and will also ensure that any letter is not replaced for unethical purpose by anybody.

Sometimes a spare copy of a circular/letter/any other document is temporarily kept on Folio side, to which a reference has been made in the noting being put up on PP side for consideration by officers. If the intention is to remove this document after the noting is considered, there is no need to give Folio Number and to docket the same. If, however, the referred document is important and if it is desired that this should continue to be available in the file, Folio number should be given, along with the docketing on PP side.

16.5 **Giving 'Back Reference', 'Forward Reference' & Folio Numbers**

A rubber stamp should be used with space provided for writing the backward and forward references. Impression of this rubber stamp should be done by the Receiving Section itself as mentioned in Para 11.1. When the dealing Clerk writes the backward reference on a new letter, the forward reference should also be entered on the earlier letter on this subject. For example, for the letter just being filed and assigned with Folio No. 78, the backward reference could be Folio No. 35. This should be indicated in the rubber stamp impression on Folio No. 78, apart from indicating Folio No. 78 as forward reference on Folio No. 35. When such a chain of BR and FR Folio numbers are entered, any particular case can be quickly studied, hopping over the papers not relevant.

16.6 Under "Subject" or in the text of the letter being filed, there may be reference to an earlier correspondence. In such cases, the respective Folio numbers should be indicated by underlining and indicating the Folio numbers in red. In some cases, the back reference may be in a different file, in which case, not only the Folio number, but also the case file number should be indicated.

17. **Processing in file**

17.1 Whenever the contents of a letter on Folio side is discussed through a noting on PP side, the clerk concerned should examine the issue in the light of the provisions in the codes, various circulars, precedents etc. The noting must be in a good English/Hindi in legible handwriting. Long sentences should be avoided. Indiscriminate use of 'and' leads to ambiguity. Whenever a case/issue is discussed on the noting side, the arguments must be presented in a logical way and also the events in chronological order. This will help the higher officer to appreciate the subject in a short time, since he has to deal with a number of files converging to him.

17.2 The noting on PP side should not end without leaving space for orders. There should be at least one or two blank papers on PP side while passing on the file from one official to the next official. The dealing clerk should ensure this. Further, he should mend files which are damaged. New volume of the file should be opened promptly when the volume in use bulges to unhandy size.

17.3 It is not proper to merely connect Folio Numbers and put up to Officer concerned with an endorsement like “For orders please”. The Clerks are expected to use their intelligence in analysing the issue and come up with suggestions to help the Officer to take decision faster.

17.4 In the noting prepared by a Clerk/OS, there should be, as far as possible, specific expression of opinion. Decision making need not be the monopoly of officers only. Opinion expressed by clerical cadre becomes decision when the officer of appropriate level approves the opinion. This, however, does not mean that the officer should not resort to lateral thinking or utilise his practical knowledge and outlook. In case the opinion of the lower official is over-ruled by the next higher official, the reason for the same should be recorded by the latter.

17.5 When a note originating from one level goes to the highest level for orders, the intermediate officials should not merely initial and pass on the file. They should make endorsements, such as, “I agree”, “Recommended”, “I do not agree because … …” etc.

17.6 When a chain of notings is put up to the Top officer, the last officer who marks the file to the Top officer should summarise the issue and seek for specific orders. In trivial cases, such a summarising may not be necessary. In some instances, it so happens that one issue is discussed in different stages and the notings continue on several pages, sometimes in an interrupted fashion due to intervening notings on other issues. It is not correct to mark such a chain of notings to Top Officer with an endorsement like “For orders please”. The last officer who marks the file to Top Officer should make a self-contained note, giving cross-references to Folios and earlier notings. Such a summarising exercise not only deepens the insight into the issue, but may also generate solution to the problem.

17.7 In the notings, the Folio Numbers should be cross-connected. It is a desirable practice not to attach flags which spoils the appearance of file and to avoid making too many holes in letters. It is seen that such flags remain for ever with rusted pins. It is also a bad practice to attach Flags A, B, C etc. and to give references to A, B & C in the notings. It is proper to use only the assigned Folio numbers as reference tool.

17.8 In case a linked file is necessary, the Folio Number and File Number should be indicated in the noting and the noting should confirm that “Linked File No... … is annexed” as the last and separate sentence.

17.9 When a noting is made to obtain the orders/approval/sanction of the competent authority, by way of forwarding the file, such noting should be placed on PP side only, and not on Folio side. However, the docket forms for recording sanction should be kept on Folio side. Sometimes a note may be sent to another officer/office in isolated manner, in which case it is treated as a letter dealt under Para 20.

17.10 Dealing of issues of continuous nature in isolated papers or in ‘baby files’ should be discouraged. The cases should be put up on the file concerned, such as, repair proposal for individual vehicles, cash award proposals, etc.

18. Letters received from higher office (Headquarters or Board) pertaining to policy matters should be very carefully dealt with. These should invariably reach the policy file concerned without delay and docketed. In the meanwhile, photocopy may be circulated to various officials concerned. However, it should be ensured that photocopies of the same letter do not get filed again and again, making the file unnecessarily bulky. The docketing procedures mentioned in Para 16.4 will caution against this bad practice.

19. Policy matter/Technical Circular File should not be used for filing ordinary correspondence, letters, reminders, etc. even if these arise in connection with the same subject.

20. **Issue of letter based on decision recorded in file**

20.1 The officer passing the order on noting side (or on any letter) should record the same very clearly. If the intention is to send a reply, he must also indicate the other parties concerned to whom copies should be sent. The dealing Clerk/OS should also use his imagination in this respect. If the letter is being sent to A, with copies to B, C and D, then the main letter to A should indicate that B, C and D are also being advised. The practice of avoiding this by “Not in original” is not desirable, but can be selectively followed only in essential cases.

20.2 It is also necessary to ensure that copy is not endorsed to unconcerned party, especially communicating contents of internal discussions/decisions in a prematured status. Such untimely and uncalled for marking of copy may give rise to unreasonable claims at a later stage.

20.3 Each letter being issued should be earnestly condensed and compressed as ‘One page letter’, which is invariably effective and appealing at the receiving end. The wordings should be short, but express the meaning fully. Very long sentences should be avoided. For the sake of bringing the main points within one page letter, supplementaries can be shifted to Annexures. With the use of computers, composing of letter to single page is much easier than before. Yet another advantage of one page letter is the economical and fast reproduction by photocopy/roneo. The age old method of starting a letter as “With reference to your above letter, it is stated that” should be avoided and the subject matter can be straightaway jumped into.

20.4 Whenever a draft letter is put up for approval in the file, references to Folio Numbers of the relevant earlier correspondence should be indicated on the draft.

20.5 After the approval of the draft, the letter should be fair typed keeping in mind presentation, accuracy, correctness of spelling, etc. While placing the finally typed copies of the letter to the officer for being signed, the Clerk/OS should affix the initials and designation on the office copy, to signify that the correctness of the typing has been verified by him. In case a letter is put up for Top Officer’s signature, the Branch Officer concerned should also record his initials on the office copy of the letter. Reference to Folio Numbers should be indicated on the office copy, even at the stage of putting up the letter for signature, as done during draft stage as indicated in Para 20.4.

20.6 Letters to outsiders should invariably be typed using letter heads, containing the logo of the organisation. Handwritten letter sent to outsiders projects a poor image of railway. In most of the cases, letters to outsiders should start with “Dear Sir/Sirs” and end with “Yours faithfully”. Railway abbreviations should not be used and the expressions should be courteous and in speaking order, avoiding the usual railway style. Railway’s Phone number, Fax number and E-mail address should be available in such letters. These formalities should be strictly observed also for the letters addressed to Commissioner of Railway Safety, Railway Trade Unions, Container Corporation, KRCL, RRB, RITES, IRCON, IRCA, 1RFC, Registrars of RCT, RRT & CAT and, last but not the least, to any retired railway employee, irrespective of his pre-retirement grade.

20.7 At the end of the letter, just below the space earmarked for signing, both the name of the signing officer and his designation should be available, Sometimes, argument is put forth, such as, "It is well known who is the Sr. DCM; why to incorporate his name?" Such arguments should be stopped forthwith and incorporation of name should be followed as a regimental discipline. The indication of the name increases the sense of responsibility on the part of the signing officer and it also enhances the credibility of the letter at the receiving end. However, the notings made by officer/official on the PP side of file need not be signed with name, but only the designation and the date of signing will do.

20.8 Sometimes an excuse is put forth for not typing the name of the signing officer, that it was not known who will finally sign the letter when the same was being typed. This is not acceptable. In such cases, which will be few in numbers, the name should be added after signing, at least by neat hand writing in capital letters.

20.9 Sometimes a Note or Memorandum is prepared and sent to various officials. This should be treated as a letter and the name of the signing officer should be available. There are two kinds of Notes: one meant for being sent to official C routed through officials A & B and the other for being simultaneously sent to A, B & C. The format of the Note should clearly indicate to which kind this belongs.

20.10 Even Office Superintendent can be authorised to sign some letters, but his name followed by "for xxx" should be available below his signature.

20.11 The designation, in some cases, may be followed by the authority of the head of the office, such as "Joint Director (A&B), for Director General".

20.12 Replies to important letters should be despatched with the approval of the competent authority, in which case the last sentence of the reply should be "This is issued with the approval of …", if the letter is signed by somebody else. In fact, it is desirable that important replies (such as to MPs, top officials of other Government Departments, Senior Executives of firms, etc.) are signed by the Top Officer or by officers of equal status.

20.13 Normally demi-official letters should not be issued among officers within the same office. There is no harm in superscribing normal letters as "For kind/immediate attention of Sri/Smt. … …" if deemed fit. There is unwarranted urge to issue D.O. letters now-a-days, which should be curbed.

20.14 After the letter in the final form is signed, the office copy should be assigned Folio Number, filed and docketed on PP side as per Para 16.4. The docketing may also indicate, such as, "Issued as per the orders/endorsement of … … at PP/F.No. … …".

20.15 The office copy should have Despatch Reference or endorsement such as "sent through special messenger Shri … … … on … … …". This will help in investigation, in case the letter does not reach the destination in time.

20.16 Preserving of the corrected draft should be based on a careful discretion. Whenever the corrections made by the signing officer significantly change the ideas or financial implications, such drafts should be preserved, duly assigning Folio Number and docketing.

20.17 Any letter should invariably be prepared, with a clear listing of the enclosures to be attached, even in the draft stage. Enclosure should be specific such as “Copy of letter in … … sheets”, “Annexure-A in … … sheets”, “2 copies of Plan No…. …” etc. The practice of stating “Enclosure: as above” should be avoided. Correct listing of enclosure will help the Despatch Clerk. If he fails to send the enclosures correctly, alround delay and confusion will occur. The office copy of a letter should also have the office copies of its enclosures and these sheets should be assigned Folio Numbers as stated in Para 16.3. However, if the enclosures are already available in the same file, duplications should be avoided and the respective Folio Numbers should be indicated under the enclosure list of the office copy.

20.18 When a reply is issued to any other office within Railway or to outsider, under the heading “Ref.” at the beginning of the reply-letter, it will be appropriate to give reference to the letter number of the addressee. There is no point in giving only our own office letter number as the past reference, since the other party will not be able to locate the same easily in their office.

20.19 Many times, letter from higher authority (say, Railway Board) is transmitted by the intermediate authority (say, CPO) to the lower authority (say Sr. DPOs). The covering letter issued by the intermediate authority should not be of routine type, such as, “for information and necessary action”. On the other hand, the covering letter should briefly indicate the significance of the directives contained in the annexed letter. If some specific action has to be taken or information has to be compiled, the covering letter should communicate further guidelines, target for compliance, proforma for compilation (if not forming a part of the annexed letter), etc. If the directives require introduction of a new system, the method and responsibility for implementation, monitoring, furnishing of feedback, evaluation, etc. should be spelt out in the covering letter.

20.20 Whenever ‘Confidential’ or ‘Secret’ letter is issued or received, this should receive the required treatment strictly. It is the responsibility of the Officers, Personal Assistants and Confidential Assistants to ensure observance of the formalities. Such correspondence should not be allowed to be transmitted through normal Dak Pad. Depending on the extent of confidentiality, closed file and/or transmission by hand should be resorted to.

21. In the case of Tender Proceedings, Selection Committee’s report etc. each manual correction should be initialed by the members of the Committee. The enclosures of the proceedings of the Tender Committee or Selection Committee (such as tabular statements) should also be jointly signed, in addition to signing each of the pages of the main proceedings. In the case of empanelment of staff, in selection/promotion, no manual correction shall be permitted in the typed list of finally empanelled staff.

22. When an officer is required to sign in a number of places (say 16) as in Agreement document, the places to be signed should be numbered in pencil such as 1/16, 2/16… … … 16/16, so that the officer can keep a watch while signing that no paper is skipped in between.

23. Indents on Stores Department should be prepared in a clear manner, preferably typed. If there are enclosures such as Detailed Specification, Drawing, Proprietory Certificate, Sanction Memo, List of Probable Suppliers, etc., the cross-reference should be available on Indent as well as enclosures. It is often seen that these papers get separated resulting in unproductive correspondence and delay.

24. The dealing Clerks are responsible to issue/put up reminders. They should not wait for instructions from the officer. OSs should also watch that important issues do not remain unattended due to failure to remind. Such an efficiency is achievable only if the dealing staff and OSs appreciate the importance of the subjects and show a sense of involvement.

25. The reminder should be so worded in a self-contained manner, that the Receiving Officer seeing it in Dak pad can recall the subject readily and activate the persons concerned. By merely giving reference to letter number and stating “your reply may be expedited”, the receiving officer is kept in puzzle, till the previous correspondence is connected and thus the matter is delayed.

26. When an issue pertaining to establishment matter is put up to the Top officer, the Establishment Officer should be the last officer to mark the file to the Top officer. In other words, the final option to comment on various suggestions given by the Branch Officers should be exercised by the Establishment Officer only. Similarly, in the case of matters involving financial implication, Finance Officer should be the last officer, to pass the final remarks before putting up to the Top Officer.

27. Whenever sanction is sought, reference to the relevant item of Schedule of Powers should be given. If sanction is sought without routing through Finance, it should be confirmed that the sanction does not need finance concurrence as per Schedule of Powers. The funds availability and overall position of budget under the proper primary unit/sub-head should be indicated to guide the sanctioning authority. In case the Finance has made some observations while giving concurrence, convincing replies to these observations should be put up to the sanctioning authority by the executive department.

28. Weeding out of files and moving them to Record Room should be a continuous process. The OSs are responsible for this. There is a tendency to keep obsolete files and demand for more space and more racks. This should not be encouraged. There are circulars issued by Railway Board regarding identification and disposal of obsolete records, while retaining important

papers, which serve as landmarks in the functioning of the organisation, apart from possessing value as heritage and/or archives material.

29. **Different categories of drawings and the method of recording approval**

29.1 Drawings prepared in an office may be classified into the following categories:

A: Proposal pertaining to approved work, meant to serve execution

B: Proposal for consideration, which may be approved in future.

C: Survey details recorded.

D: Enclosure for a report, paper or letter.

E: Type designs.

F: Completion drawing.

G: Miscellaneous.

In fact, alphabets A to G (or any other notation) may be associated with drawing number in order to signify the type of drawing it belongs to.

29.2 The noting which seeks for approval of drawing meant for execution of work (i.e. Category A), should give reference to the Item Number of Works Programme or List of Approved Works. The name plate of the drawing should indicate the Item Number of Works Programme and space for writing the Sanction Number of the estimate. The name plate should also contain the names of Draftsmen, Engineers and other officers involved, along with their signatures and date. The approving authority should scrutinise the drawing in the light of the justification and the scope of the work as described in the Works Programme. In most cases, drawings of Category-A require multi disciplinary approval.

29.3 In case a drawing is made as draft proposal (i.e. Category-B), not referring to any sanctioned work, misleading caption such as “Proposed extension to Running Room", etc, should not be given. The appropriate caption in this case can be "A tentative proposal for extending the Running Room". The origin for such a draft proposal, such as, Inspection Notes of GM, PNM subject, etc. should be mentioned in the drawing. Approval for this kind of drawing should also be got recorded in the file. The approving authority should scrutinise the scope of the proposal and ensure that the same is optimal.

29.4 Drawing of Category-C prepared only for the purpose of recording the site information, soil particulars, etc. collected through a field survey/ investigation, will be useful to serve as the basis for any proposal of addition or alteration, such as, new building, drainage scheme, yard, etc. Such drawings should have the names and signatures of the staff who are responsible for collection of details and depiction in the drawing. Though formal approval is not mandatory, the competent officer should verify the drawing for its completeness, before signing.

29.5 A drawing/sketch of Category-D prepared only to serve as an enclosure to a letter or report, should have an endorsement to that effect, so that such a drawing cannot be mistaken as a proposal or as an approved work, at a later date. Formal approval may not be needed; but the originator of the letter or report should verify the drawing and sign.

29.6 Drawing of Category-E pertains to the standard type designs, such as for, quarters, platform bench, water hydrant, signages, platform trolley for eatables, etc. These are normally prepared by Headquarters. There is no harm if divisions, sub-divisions and depots evolve type designs for trial, meant for standardisation by Headquarters at a later stage. Recording of approval by the competent authority is very essential in the case of drawings of type designs.

29.7 Drawing of Category-F, i.e., completion drawing will serve as the reliable document of the asset created. Completion drawing, meant for being certified by the field engineers after the asset is created in full shape, should be carefully prepared. The descriptions in the completion drawing should be different from those in the drawing for execution. Writings such as "Suitable foundation to be provided", 'Precast RC slabs to be laid on base concrete 1:3:6", etc should not be permitted in completion drawing. Instead exact details of foundation actually provided and precise specification of the works as executed should be available in the completion drawing. In short, working drawing gives directions, whereas completion drawing records history. Since most of the drawings are now-a-days made through AUTOCAD, the drawings prepared for execution can be altered as completion drawings, with much more ease than in the case of hand-prepared drawings. Completion drawing requires countersignature of competent authority, based on the field officers' certification.

29.8 Drawings which do not fall under any of the above said descriptions can be referred as 'Miscellaneous'. Approval may not be required in these cases.

30. When an estimate for a work is put up in file for sanction by the competent authority, the basic drawings which technically describe the location, scope and details of the work should also be kept in the file, so that the sanctioning authority can exercise cursory check on the completeness of the estimate with reference to the proposal and drawing. Intermediate officers, through whom the file is routed, should also check these aspects.

31. As soon as the original drawing is signed by the Top officer, a clear print or photocopy should be taken and kept in the file assigning a Folio Number and docketing the same. Such a copy in the file should not have any manual correction superimposed. This becomes the permanent record of the

approved version. If a correction is subsequently made in the drawing, the same procedure should be repeated after the amendment note on the drawing is signed by the competent authority. Whenever copies of an amended drawing are sent to the field officers/officials, it is necessary to call back the copies of the earlier version, so that they are kept out of circulation. Alternatively field officers/officials should be asked to make bold entry in red on the obsolete copies signifying the receipt of the amended version. While investigating the cause of collapse of porch in a station building under construction, it was seen that the drawing with the supervisor and contractor was different from the original with the head office. This original had certain corrections without duly approved amendment notes. Such situations can be avoided by treating a clear print of drawing as a document to be preserved in file.

32. **Drawings for joint approval by more than one office/organization**

32.1 Whenever a drawing prepared by one office (say, Construction Wing) is sent for approval of another office (say, Open Line), it should be insisted that the Originating Office should send 2 clear prints without any manual correction. In case, the Approving Office, suggests some changes, the Originating Office should carry out the corrections in the original tracing and send afresh two prints without any manual correction. After signing on both copies as token of approval, one copy should be returned to the originating office and the other copy should be preserved in the file concerned of the Receiving Office. This procedure will ensure un-ambiguous communication between the two offices and authentic record of the final arrangement mutually agreed upon. If the drawings are exchanged through magnetic media, suitable security should be ensured.

32.2 If a drawing is made through a consultancy firm and is to be approved by an office of Railway, the same procedure mentioned in Para 32.1 should be adopted.

32.3 A drawing prepared by a consultancy firm should have two distinct name plates. The name plate at right-bottom extreme should be in the lines of the usual name plate on railway drawing, with the details such as “South Central Railway - Name of work - WP reference - sanction reference - Description of the component detailed in the drawing - Names of railway officials verifying the design and drawing (prepared by consultant) and their signatures with dates” etc. The other name plate on the drawing should adjoin the railway name plate on its left side and should contain details such as “Name of the consultancy firm - Consultancy Contract ref. Number - Names of the firm’s officials responsible for design, checking, drawing and counter checking and their signatures with dates”. Only after the signatures are made on the railway name plate, the firm’s drawing is authenticated as railway drawing and is qualified for execution. It is sometimes noticed that accountability and responsibility are diluted, when drawings are prepared through consultant. The field engineers directly receive drawings from consultant without recorded approval of railway. Such undesirable practices should be curbed.

33. Ammonia prints are outdated and are not legible if the shelf-life of the paper expires. These prints get bleached by sun light. Clear photocopies will greatly assist the field executives, for which the optimal solution lies in adoption of metric sizes AO to A4. It is possible to scheme out even a big drawing with several views, split into main and part drawings, all fitting into A3 size. With drawings being prepared through AUTOCAD, it is all the more befitting to go in for handy size drawings (such as A3), while retaining the clarity of details.

34. Suppose, A3 size is really found inadequate for complicated drawing, A2 size can be adopted, because by folding this into two halves (each of A3 size) photocopies of both the portions can be taken and thereafter pasted.

35. The functioning of Railway is basically on technical principles. Even the Clerks should learn some fundamentals in technical matters. They should be able to understand and use units, such as square metre, hectare, wagon kilometre per day, etc. The standard units in CGS system (except special Railways notations such as NTKM, GMT, etc.) should be written in small letters without full stops, such as:

Metre	m	not as M or Mtr.
Centimetre	cm	not as CM or C.M.
Squaremetre	sqm	not as SQ.M or M2
Cubic metre	cum	not as CU.M. or M3
Kilogram	kg	not as Kg or K.G.
Tonne	t	not asT
Millilitre	ml	not as ML or M.L.
Kilometre	km	not as Km, KM. or KM
Kilometre per hour	km/h	not as KMPH

Plural form should not be used in the above abbreviations, i.e. cm will stand for centimetre as well as centimeters, km will stand for kilometre as well as kilometres.

36. Standard rail-sections such as 75 R, 90 R, etc. should be written as such. These should not be converted into metric unit such as 37.27 kg/m and

44.73 kg/m, whereas the standard 52 kg and 60 kg rail sections should be written as such. In other words, original nomenclatures should not undergo unit conversion.

37. Railway abbreviations for stations, posts, etc. should not be used in conjunction with other organisations. Assistant Engineer, PWD, Nagpur can not be shortened as AEN/PWD/NGP. District Collector, Guntur can not be referred as Collector/GNT. While addressing CAT in communications, appeals, etc. they should be invariably referred as Hon'ble Central

Administrative Tribunal. While addressing non-Railway organisations, Railway abbreviations should not be used even for referring Railway items, since the recipient will find it difficult to decipher. For example, if a letter sent to a candidate freshly selected for IRSE asking him to report to GM/SER/GRC, he cannot understand.

38. There exists the incorrect practice of indiscriminately prefixing "M/s" to all firms such as M/s IOC, M/s BHEL, M/s Indiana Links, M/s. Syndicate Bank, etc. The correct way to refer them is The IOC, The BHEL, The Indiana Links, The Syndicate Bank, etc. "M/s" can be prefixed only to firms containing names of Persons, such as M/s. Shantilal and Sons, M/s Shah and Bros, M/s. Plasser and Theurer, M/s. Kumar and Associates, etc. "The Kirloskar Electric Ltd." is the correct expression, whereas for Kirloskar Bros. Ltd., the correct prefix is "M/s".

39. The various paragraphs and sub-paras in a letter or report should be given metric numbering system. It is easy to learn this system, just by going through some standard books, publications by RDSO, etc. Roman numbers such as I, II, III, etc. or i, ii, iii , etc. should be sparingly used, since this is obsolete in the modern times. As far as possible, even sub-sub items should be numbered as 1,2,3 etc. or in a limited way serialled as a, b, c etc.

40. **Conclusion:**

40.1 These office procedures by themselves cannot bring about efficiency or improved work culture, unless the Clerks acquire a reasonably good knowledge of the manuals and codes of the department and the draftsmen update their technical knowledge. The system established by these procedures will, however, act as a catalyst to enhance the inquisitiveness of staff and to elevate the thinking power of decision-makers.

40.2 By going through all these procedures in one stroke, one may wonder, whether the archaic colonial procedures are being revived. But in reality, these procedures are very logical and easy to be followed once transformed as habitual; thereafter these render the system fast-acting and right acting. Accountability is the key note of modern management. The procedures stipulated in this circular establish accountability in clear terms. Even as we shift to “paperless office” with extensive use of computers in future, the basic principles contained in these procedures will hold good and have to be incorporated into the software of office working.

40.3 Every officer often faces embarrassing situation with higher officer, trade union leader, aggrieved staff, consumer council, representative of public, contractor, supplier or political leader, when he is questioned for the unawareness of the issue, irresponsiveness, delay, wrong decision or failure. The root cause for such a situation can sometimes be traced out to be the collapse of office procedures, perhaps combined with non-involvement or ignorance on the part of a few employees in office or field.

40.4 Whereas the importance of counselling and training cannot be underestimated, many of the avoidable lapses can be eliminated and the work-culture can be upgraded by implementing these rationalised office procedures.

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