

Safety Audits

SrDSO, along with his/her team comprising Inspectors of different departments, will conduct Safety Audits at major stations, way-side stations, sections, Level Crossings and other installations in the Division covering all aspects pertaining to all departments involved in train operation and safety and make a detailed report.

In addition to the Divisional Safety Team, Safety Audit will also be done by other Divisional Safety Teams (Inter Divisional safety Audit), Head Quarters Safety Team (High Level Safety Audit) and other Railway Safety Teams (Inter Railway Safety Audit). These Safety Audits and compliances to the Safety Audit Reports will be monitored at Zonal and Railway Board level. Controlling officers of the concerned departments shall take necessary corrective actions and submit a compliance report to the concerned Safety Team.

Scheduling of Inspections

In order to ensure that all areas of a division are covered in an effective periodicity, a schedule for various types of inspections is made. Based on the goals to be achieved, the schedules can be tailored. However, a minimum level of inspection should always be ensured so that safety is not compromised at any point of time. The schedules are generally issued by divisional or zonal headquarters.

Quality of Inspections

(Excerpts from PCOM's DO letter No. T.387/Insp./Optg/Rules/Vol.II dated 29.11.2021)

While carrying out inspections, the following points may be noted:

1. Quality of inspection shall be ensured. Exceptional reports that require corrections/ improvements in safe working shall be reported prominently and first. List of factual information/items found in order shall be reported in the last, if required.
2. Stations nearer to headquarters and bigger stations that have easy access are being inspected frequently. It is desirable to cover remotely located stations as well. Covering all stations/locations periodically shall be monitored by divisional headquarters.
3. Inspections shall be spread throughout the month, instead of month end rush to complete as per schedule.

There is a need to ensure prompt compliances to the observations noticed by various inspecting officials, at Station, Divisional and Zonal level. Station Superintendents shall submit 'Action Take Reports (ATR)' on the observations made by inspecting officials by taking appropriate corrective actions such as counseling, advising concerned departments in writing etc., and submit the Action Taken Report to SrDOMs, with a copy to concerned Inspecting Official. The ATR shall not be mere 'Noted' remark.

Station Superintendents shall escalate the issues to the concerned authorities, if the observations are beyond his/her purview. DOMs/AOMs (General) shall monitor the compliance of scheduled inspections made by various inspecting officials.

Effective Inspections

In order to ensure that an inspection achieves its purpose, the following action needs to be taken before / during / after the inspection time.

Preparation for inspection

1. The inspecting official should have a clear understanding of the unit to be inspected. For a station inspection, the station lay out – its signaling, special features of working and the instructions in regard to reception, dispatch crossing shunting and running through of trains should be studied in advance, especially for a detailed planned inspection. The inspecting official should have a good knowledge of not only General and Subsidiary Rules but also of Station Working Rules.
2. The inspecting official should have a detailed check list for the inspection. Standard formats / check lists are available for all types of inspection. The inspecting official shall also identify select features of working which he/she intends to check during his inspection. For instance, one may like to emphasis on the correct reception and dispatch of trains, and observance of safety rules by the staff or on utilization of stock, detention to passenger or goods train, knowledge of staff etc. The inspecting officials shall keep in mind of the recent incidents/issues that have come for discussion.
3. All books, forms and registers shall be kept ready for the inspecting official so that time is not wasted in searching for those during the inspection. Machine generated reports like Data logger exception reports, Speedometer reports, FOIS/ICMS reports for terminal stations shall also be taken out before the inspection. Specific time period shall be chosen in line with the purpose of inspection, so that old records can be kept ready for perusal. This will help in observing any trends in irregularities if identified.

Conducting the inspection

1. All registers, books and forms should be carefully pursued to check whether the staff has complied with their instructions. If any of these instructions have not been carried out written explanation of the Station Master should be obtained.
2. Observe the actual working of staff and equipment by means of personal observation as well as cross checking with registers for the same.
3. Intensive scrutiny of selected features during preparation and ones identified through intuition through careful observation and cross checking in detail and questioning the staff concerned.

4. All books and registers inspected must be signed by the inspecting official with date.
5. If any irregularities are found, they shall be discussed with the staff concerned as well as their supervisors. Such a discussion will prove to be educative and produce desired results.
6. It shall not be enough merely to point out the irregularity of the staff; matters must be put right personally while at the station to the extent possible.
7. As far as possible, discuss the points common to two or more branches, like the Signaling & Telecommunication branch or C&W, Civil Engineering and Commercial branches jointly for objective and acceptable solutions. This will help in not only arriving at correct conclusions and forming sound views but also in avoiding unnecessary correspondence.
8. Interact with the staff and test their knowledge on aspects pertaining to their duties and recent developments in railways and counsel them wherever required.
9. Inquire on their welfare and any issues cropping up and try to solve or give suitable advises to the problems. Make the staff comfortable to express their problems without any inhibition as hidden dissatisfactions will demoralize and de-motivate, which cause unimaginable loss to the administration.

Compliance monitoring

1. All inspections should be followed up with a clear, precise inspection note bringing out the deficiencies to the forefront along with the desired action to be taken. They need to be marked to the concerned person and it shall be ensured that the inspection note reaches to all the concerned including the unit inspected.
2. The action taken by the concerned staff / supervisor / officer / department on the deficiencies brought out should be followed up closely for satisfactory compliance. Non complied deficiencies of previous inspections done in the same place have to be highlighted and escalated to higher ups as the case may be.

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