

**Executive Summary**

The Performance Audit of ‘Derailments in Indian Railways’ for the period 2017-18 to 2020-21 of the Indian Railways (IR) was conducted during the year 2021-22. The focus of the audit was to ascertain whether measures to prevent derailments/collisions were clearly laid down and implemented by the Ministry of Railways (MoR). Timely conducting of investigations on derailments/collisions and implementation of the preventive recommendations were the other areas of Audit. Emphasis was laid on the deployment of funds in accordance with the guidelines of Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh (RRSK).

**Summary of Conclusions**

- There were shortfalls ranging from 30-100 *per cent* in inspections by Track Recording Cars required to assess geometrical and structural conditions of railway tracks.

**Para 2.2**

- The idling of Track machines was noticed on account of blocks not given by the Operating Department (32 *per cent*), blocks not planned by Divisions (30 *per cent*), operational problems (19 *per cent*), non-availability of staff (five *per cent*) and no scope of work (three *per cent*).

**Para 2.4.1**

- Analysis of 1129 ‘Inquiry Reports’ of derailment accidents in 16 Zonal Railways (ZRs) revealed 24 factors responsible for derailments in the selected cases/accidents. The total damages/loss of assets in these cases was reported as ₹ 32.96 crore.

**Para 3.2.2**

- Total 422 derailments were attributable to the ‘Engineering Department’. The major factor responsible for derailment was related to ‘maintenance of track’ (171 cases), followed by ‘deviation of track parameters beyond permissible limits’ (156 cases).

**Para 3.3.1**

- The number of derailments attributable to the ‘Mechanical Department’ was 182. Defects in ‘wheel diameter variation and defects in coaches/wagons’ were the major contributor (37 *per cent*) to the factors responsible for derailments.

**Para 3.3.1**

- The number of accidents attributable to the ‘Loco Pilots’ was 154. ‘Bad Driving/Over speeding’ was the major factor responsible for derailments.

**Para 3.3.1**

- The number of accidents attributable to the ‘Operating Department’ was 275. ‘Incorrect setting of points and other mistakes in shunting operations’ accounted for 84 *per cent*.

**Para 3.3.1**

- In 63 *per cent* cases, the ‘inquiry reports’ were not submitted to the accepting authority within the prescribed time schedule. In 49 *per cent* cases, there was a delay in the acceptance of the reports by accepting authorities.

**Para 3.4.1**

- The overall expenditure on Priority-I works from RRSK showed a declining trend from 81.55 *per cent* in 2017-18 to 73.76 *per cent* in 2019-20. The allotment of funds for Track Renewal works declined from ₹ 9607.65 crore (2018-19) to ₹ 7417 crore in 2019-20. The funds allocated to track renewal works were also not fully utilized. Out of 1127 derailments during 2017-21, 289 derailments (26 *per cent*) were linked to track renewals.

**Para 4.3 and 4.4**

- Fire extinguishers had not been provided in 27,763 coaches (62 *per cent*) in violation of extant norms.

**Para 6.2**

- Out of 2908 manned level crossings (nine *per cent*) targeted for elimination during 2018-21, only 2059 (70 *per cent*) level crossings were eliminated.

**Para 6.3.1**

**Summary of Recommendations**

- *IR should ensure strict adherence to the scheduled timelines for conducting and finalization of accident inquiries.*
- *IR may develop a strong monitoring mechanism to ensure timely implementation of maintenance activities by adopting fully mechanized methods of track maintenance and improved technologies.*
- *Railway Administration must follow the ‘guiding principles for deployment of RRSK funds’ to avoid fund constraints in the area of Priority-I works.*
- *IR may prepare the ‘Detailed Outcome Framework’ for each item of safety work as per the indicative outcomes to gauge whether the benefits derived out of the RRSK funds are in the conformity with the objectives behind the creation of the Fund.*