

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
RAILWAY BOARD**

No. 2014/TG-III/631/2

New Delhi, Dated: 30.01.2015

The Chief Commercial Managers,
All Indian Railways.

The Chairman and Managing Director,
IRCTC, New Delhi.

(Commercial Circular No. 06 /2015)

Sub: Service of branded Ready to Eat (RTE) meals on Trains.


In compliance of the Budget Announcement 2014-15, Ministry of Railways has decided to introduce service of branded pre-cooked 'Ready to Eat' meals on trains in order to improve quality and hygiene of on-board catering services and also to offer more variety of food to the passengers. Following policy guidelines are issued.

1. Introduction of 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) meals :

- 1.1 Ready to Eat (RTE) meals includes pre-cooked food, frozen food, etc. packaged through modern technology including retort packing which have a shelf life of not less than three months.
- 1.2 In the first phase, service of branded pre-cooked 'Ready to Eat' (RTE) meals/frozen foods will be served on all Mail/Express Trains having Pantry Cars as an 'add on' option under the category of a-la-carte to the passengers in addition to other standard items as part of the catering services on payment basis.
- 1.3 The licensees of the Pantry Cars may be directed to introduce branded RTE meal as approved by the nominated zonal railway. They shall ensure availability of the items of approved 'Ready to Eat' meal and mandatorily provide an option to the passengers as it is part of the a-la-carte items.
- 1.4 Based on the response and acceptability of these foods, RTE meals will be introduced in other mobile and static catering units in due course.

2. Shortlisting of 'Ready to Eat' brands :

- 2.1 North Western Railway on behalf of Indian Railways shall select firms which produce reputed and branded RTE meals/items so as to provide variety, quality & hygienic RTE meals at affordable price to the passengers across all zonal railways. Approval/shortlisting of firms will be done by North Western Railway through Expression of Interest (EOI) to ensure participation of reputed firms having national and/or international presence with wide range of RTE products.
- 2.2 A panel of shortlisted reputed firms which produce 'Ready to Eat' meal must be finalized by North Western Railway by a 3 member standing committee of JAG/SG officers from Commercial, Health & Finance department to be nominated by the PHOD/CHOD of the respective department. The criteria for shortlisting must ensure that only reputed brands are selected by the committee nominated and approved by the CCMs.


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- 2.3 The panel of firms so empanelled shall be valid for three years which is extendable by further two years from the date of notification subject to satisfactory performance of the brands, which is measured by the following parameters.
- a) No serious complaints from passengers.
 - b) Validity of necessary certificates with regard to food safety standards & food manufacturing standards under FSSAI.
 - c) Compliance with the technical quality that meets National/International Standards like ISO 22000, HACCP etc.
- 2.4 In cases of new entrants/applicants for supplying RTE meals during the period, the zonal railways may consider placement of developmental orders on them through trials. On successful completion of trials, empanelment may be done by North Western Railway following the procedure mentioned in this policy in order to ensure wide participation of RTE meal suppliers.
- 2.5 It must be ensured that the selected firms comply with the statutory requirements such as Service Tax registration, TAN Number, Food license/PFA license, registration/incorporation of the firm, etc.

3. Eligibility Criteria for shortlisting of RTE meals Brands.


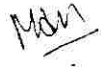
- 3.1 The firms must comply with the technical quality that meets National and/or International Standards like ISO 22000, HACCP, etc. and must possess valid certificates in this regard.
- 3.2 The firms must comply with the food safety and quality standard norms laid down by the FSSAI and other statutory requirements notified from time to time.
- 3.3 The firms must follow the 'state of the art' retort technology and packaging system which can produce RTE meal having shelf life of minimum 3 months. The retort system should comply with the national and/or international norms and standards of food safety, quality and hygiene. Certificates in this regard must be submitted by the firm before empanelment alongwith EOI.
- 3.4 The non vegetarian items shall be supplied by RTE meal firms having appropriate FSSAI license for manufacturing such non-veg. items.
- 3.5 The firms must have the experience of a minimum of 3 years of manufacturing/supply including institutional supply of packaged Ready to Eat food items.
- 3.6 'Ready to Eat' meal of the firms must be available for sale in shops/Super Bazaar/outlets/stores. The firms shall submit the document showing their sales in the last three preceding financial years at the time of EOI.
- 3.7 The firms must have an annual turnover of not less than Rs. 50 lakhs for each of the last 3 (Three) preceding years.

4. Availability of branded 'Ready to Eat' food items on trains

- 4.1 Licensee of the pantry cars shall ensure that only the railway approved RTE meal of shortlisted firms are available in the pantry car and are accordingly served to the passengers on demand on payment basis.

- 4.2 In case the branded RTE meal items are not available on trains for sale, it will be treated as deficiency in service for which penalty will be imposed on the concerned licensees of the pantry car.
- 5. Menu & Tariff of Ready to Eat meal**
- 5.1 The firms, so approved by railways for supplying items of RTE meal shall design economic and customised sachets of the food items including combo meal both veg. and non-veg. apart from other RTE food items at a price range of a-la-carte items already notified. Rates shall be fixed on the basis of extant rates already notified for a-la-carte items.
- 5.2 The quantity and rates of RTE items to be supplied to the passengers are to be approved by the CCM, North Western Railway prior to its introduction.
- 5.3 The rates of RTE meal shall be inclusive of all prevailing taxes (VAT, Service Tax, GST etc.), plus License Fee (if any), vendor's commission (if any), other overhead charges. The rates printed on the 'Ready to Eat' meal packet only should be collected as MRP.
- 5.4 The licensee shall be responsible for payment of all applicable taxes notified by the government from time to time to the authorised bodies.
- 5.5 Menu cards available with the waiters must indicate the name of the 'Ready to Eat' meal items, brand name, weight and rates etc. for the information of the passengers.
- 5.6 Wide publicity requiring availability of 'Ready to Eat' meal items in the Pantry Cars as an added choice a-la-carte item to the passengers should be displayed by the zonal railways and also by the licensee.
- 5.7 In order to ensure the availability of 'Ready to Eat' meal items on trains, the nominated firms, approved by railways, may coordinate with the licensees appointed by railways for supply, rates, commission, co-branding, logistics etc.
- 5.8 The Railways will conduct co-ordination meetings from time to time with all stake holders including the Licensee and RTE meal firms to sort out disputes, other issues if any, to ensure that this scheme is successfully implemented.
- 6. Presentation of "Ready to Eat" meals**
- 6.1 'Ready to Eat' meal items are to be served in sealed and packed conditions to the passengers to ensure that there is no adulteration and contamination of the products due to multiple handling. The licensees shall ensure that 'Ready to Eat' items are served in such a manner that the passenger can open the sachets by tearing it from the tear notch and can eat it easily.
- 6.2 The sachets/combo tray sets/pouch/retorts will be opened by the passengers themselves. The licensee will ensure supply of heated sachets along with necessary disposable tray/plate/ spoon/napkin, small sachet of salt and pepper etc. The RTE sachets should be designed in such manner that it can be opened easily by the passengers by tearing the packets from the tear notch available and marked in the packet.
- 7. License Fee**
- 7.1 Since the scheme is to be implemented on trains with pantry cars for which licence fee has already been fixed after assessment of sales and has been realized and that it is a replacement of an a-la-carte items, no additional

licence fee on account of sale of 'Ready to Eat' meal will be realized by the zonal railways from the licensee.

7.2 Railways will act as a facilitator for provision of such ready to eat meals on trains in order to give choice, variety, quality and hygiene.

8. Supervision & Monitoring

8.1 Railway will provide adequate equipment/arrangement like hot cases, oven, boiler, heating equipment etc. in the Pantry Cars for ensuring heating of RTE meal sachet/combo tray sets/pouch/retort etc. before serving the same to the passengers.

8.2 Zonal Railways will conduct regular checks/inspection of trains to ensure availability of RTE meal at approved rates as an 'add on' option to the passengers. It must also be ensured that the brands of meals/food items its quality, quantity, rates, hygiene etc. are properly maintained while serving these items to the passengers.

8.3 After the launch, CCMs shall undertake a drive on the trains for ensuring the availability of branded and approved 'Ready to Eat' meals to the passengers on trains.

8.4 Passenger feedback and opinion shall be obtained regularly and should also be a part of the drive conducted by Zonal Railways. The feedback so obtained be analysed and used for improving the quality of service.

8.5 After the launch of the ready to eat meals on trains, **media campaign** by CPRO of the concerned zonal railways be initiated so as to create awareness and to popularize the RTE meals being served in the trains.

9. CCM/NWR may ensure that the shortlisting of brands is done within **one month** from receipt of this letter and the 'Ready to Eat' choice is made available for sale latest by 01.03.2015. These instructions shall come into force with immediate effect.

10. This policy will be reviewed after one year of successful implementation.

This issues with the concurrence of Finance Directorate of Ministry of Railways.

Hindi version will follow.

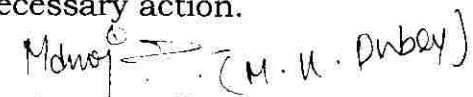
Kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter.


(K.P. Yadav)
Director (Tourism & Catering)
Railway Board

No. 2014/TG-III/631/2

New Delhi, Dated: 30.01.2015

Copy to: FA&CAO, All Indian Railways, for information & necessary action.


For Financial Commissioner, Railway Board