

EAST COAST RAILWAY

CE CIRCULAR NO: 08

Sub: Guidelines for Plantations along the Railway tracks-  
Instructions regarding existing trees – Steps to be taken  
to avoid detention to trains due to falling of trees.


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There are numerous advantages we can derive from afforestation. At the same time there have been cases of falling of trees causing detention to trains. To avoid such instances, it will advantageous and also economical if precaution taken in selecting the suitable species and planting the samplings at proper distance from the track. So few guide lines in this regard are given vide Annexure A.

For the existing trees, detailed instructions already exist in the manuals regarding cutting of branches/trees which obstruct visibility and patrolling of tracks during stormy whether to prevent obstructions by falling of trees. In this connection, the extract of relevant paras 222 & 1001.3 of IRPWM and 715 of IRWM is enclosed as Annexure B.

These instructions should be meticulously followed to ensure that no tree is allowed to fall on railway tracks, and that high trees should not be planted within a distance of 50 feet on either side of the railway tracks. It is also suggested that before monsoon season, SE(P.Way) and SE(TRD)/SE(Signal) PWI and electrification inspectors/signal inspectors should inspect the sections to mark vulnerable trees which are likely to fall on railway track/communication line/OHE lines during storms and heavy rains and ensure that a proper watch is kept on these trees during monsoon season/stormy weather.

Encl: Annexure A & B.



7.5.04

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General Guide line for Tree Plantation in Railway land

1. A row of trees of suitable species like Eucalyptus, Babul, Shesham & Teak etc, should be planted along the Railway Boundary on either side of Railway line to demarcate the Railway boundaries.
2. The distance between the rows and between the individual trees may be kept such that maximum numbers of trees are planted but the growth of the plants is not affected adversely.
3. Platform trees for shades should be of dwarf variety only. Flowering plants/shrubs like Bougainvillea etc. shall also be planted. Trees on platforms shall not be allowed to grow more than 3.6 m (12') high of which bottom 1.8 m (6') should be clear without branches and leaves.
4. No tree should be planted within 6m (20') of the center line of track. There should be no tree plantation between outer signal/sighting boards on either end of the station on the side on which signals and signal overhead alignments are provided. Similarly no tree should be planted within 3 m (10') under any ACSR/Signal/Telegraph alignments. Only flowering shrubs can be planted at these locations.
5. No tree shall be planted inside of curves to avoid infringement of visibility.
6. Along railway line on approaches to Railway Stations (on the side where plantation is to be done);
  - a. Within 6m (20 feet) track, only ornamental shrubs should be planted.
  - b. Beyond 6 m to 15.25 m (20 feet to 50 feet) ornamental trees like amaltas, gulmohar, pride of India etc.
  - c. Beyond 15.25 m (50 feet) up to boundary post, Euclyptus, Babul, Mango, Sheesham, Teak etc.
7. If forest department is taking up plantation work, they will also be guided with the above safety aspects before planting trees.

Extracts of Para 222 & 1001.3 of IRPWM and 715 of IRWM

**Para – 222 of IRPWM 1999:**

- (a) *Trees and bushes that interfere or tend to interfere with the view from a train of signals on level crossings or along the insides of curves shall be cut. When cut, it should be ensured that they do not foul the track.*
- (b) *When trees and bushes which interfere with the view of signals or level crossings are on private land, steps to clear the obstructions should be taken as laid down in section 15 of the Indian Railways Act reproduced below:*

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However in new Railway act, i.e. Indian Railway Act 1989, this is appearing as section no 14 and this section is amalgam of section 9 and 15 of Indian Railway Act 1890. So extract of section 14 is given below:

**Section-14 of Indian Railway Act 1989:**

**14. Temporary entry upon land to remove obstruction, to repair or to prevent accident.**

- (1) *Where in the opinion of a railway administration -*
  - (a) *There is imminent danger that any tree, post or structure may fall on the railway so as to obstruct the movement of rolling stock; or*
  - (b) *Any tree, post structure or light obstructs the view of any signal provided for movement of rolling stock; or*
  - (c) *Any tree, post or structure obstructs any telephone or telegraph line maintained by it,*

*It may take such steps as may be necessary to avert such danger or remove such obstruction and submit a report thereof to the Central Government in such manner and within such time as may be prescribed.*

- (2) *Where in the opinion of a Railway administration*
  - a) *A slip or accident has occurred (or)*
  - b) *There is apprehension of any slip or accident to any cutting, embankment or other work on a Railway.*

*It may enter upon any lands adjoining the railway and do all such works as maybe necessary for the purpose of repairing or preventing such slip or accident and submit a report thereof to the Central Government in such time as may be prescribed.*

(3) *The Central government may, after considering the report under sub-section (1) or sub-section (2), in the interest of public safety, by order,*

direct the railway administration that further action under Sub-Section (1) or Sub-Section (2) shall be stopped or the same shall be subject to such conditions as may be specified in that order.

Para 1001.3 of IRPWM 1999:

*No change*

Gang patrol during abnormal rainfall or hurricane – in the event of a sudden severe storm hurricane in the day or night, the Mate should, on his own initiative, organize patrolling over the length affected independent of others patrolling if any being done. This patrol should, in case of heavy rain fall, confine its inspection to known points of danger such as cuttings or culverts likely to scour, banks affected by tanks likely breach and bridge approaches. In case of hurricane (heavy gale) the patrolman should inspect the length of track likely to be fouled by falling of trees, etc.

Para 715 of IRWM 2000:

Felling in proximity of track and within railway limits:

*No change*

(a) Trees and bushes that interfere or tend to interfere with the view from a train, of signals or level crossings or along the insides of curves shall be cut. When cut, it should be ensured that they do not foul the track.

It is however desirable that as many trees as possible be retained, consistent with ensuring the safety of trains. Relaxation in distance from track is left to the discretion of the Assistant Engineer who will satisfy himself that no risk of trees falling across the line is taken. The following are among the relaxations: -

- (i) Trees may be reduced in height by lopping the top branches to obviate danger of obstruction.
- (i) Branches on the trackside may only be removed, leaving those on the side remote from the track, thus rendering it impossible for the tree to fall across the track.

b) When a group of trees is to be felled, each tree should be carefully marked, identified, classified and measured. Tenders may be invited for the felling and purchase of timber of such lots of trees, stipulating a time limit for the felling and removal from railway land of each lot. When inviting tenders, the classification and size of trees need not be quoted, the tender being in respect of a certain number of marked trees only, at the specified Kilometrage.

c) Joint survey: -

Annually, joint survey of the trees should be carried out by junior scale officers of Engineering, S&T, Electrical department etc. and trees which are likely to endanger safety of track should be identified and felled/lopped as may be considered necessary. A report should be sent to the Divisional Engineer and Divisional Safety Officer.