

Joint Procedure order for undertaking digging work in the vicinity of underground Signalling, Electrical and Telecommunication Cables.

Ref: Letter No. 2021/Tele/5(2)/3-Part (1) (3425647) dated 12.06.2023

A joint Procedure order (JPO) for undertaking digging work in the vicinity of underground Signalling, Electrical and Telecommunication cables was issued last vide Board's Letter No. 2003/Tele/RCIL/1Pt.IX dated 24.06.2013 (Telecom Circular No. 17/2013). Notwithstanding the provision contained in the JPO for protection of cables, a significant number of cable cuts incidents and practical deficiencies in implementation of certain provisions of the said JPO were reported.

Railway Board, therefore, constituted a committee of SAG officers to revisit the JPO. Based on the recommendations of the committee, Board (MI) has approved broad guidelines for procedure to be adopted by Zonal Railways for protection of cables while undertaking digging work in their vicinity. These guidelines are in supersession of the JPO vide Telecom circular No. 17/2013. In addition, Board asked to issue local guidelines /JPOs based on the local conditions.

Based on these Railway boards guidelines, the following JPO is prepared for undertaking digging work in the vicinity of underground Signalling, Electrical and Telecommunication cables.

1.(a) Cable route plan for all types of cable of S&T and Electrical department must be made available block section wise on Railnet (http://10.205.49.30/swintra_new/site/snt_home.php) which is accessible to all user departments. At present all the telecom cable route plans are available on SWR Railnet site. The signalling cable route plans are available in Sr. DSTE office. Progressively integrated cable route plan for signalling and Telecommunication and Electrical cables clearly showing Railway land boundaries shall be made available on Railnet (http://10.205.49.30/swintra_new/site/snt_home.php) by the respective division. The cable route plans available on the website can be downloaded for getting a general idea of the cable route. However before taking up the work, permission of Sr.DSTE/Sr.DEE should be taken to ensure that the latest updated cable routes is advised to the contractor.

(b)Executing organisations like Construction/Project unit, KRIDE, RE, RITES, IRCON, RCIL, RVNL, GSU etc shall ensure that provision for cable locating and shifting of the cable/utility is kept in estimate while sanctioning any work involving digging in the vicinity of the cable. State Govt authorities and other agencies also to be advised by respective coordinating department to do so. Such provision should also be kept in works being executed by various departments in the Divisions. In case of sanctioned estimates where such provision is not there, contingency provisions may be utilised or estimate may be revised to provide for locating and shifting the cables.

(c) Local instruction/ JPO/ guidelines regarding protection of cables and penalty clauses for damages to cable should form part of tender documents. All project execution agencies State Govt authorities and other agencies also to be advised by respective coordinating department to do so.

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(d) Provision for tracing and marking of cable route must be included in contract agreement. Executing agency shall trace and mark the cable route with the help of S&T / Electrical department before undertaking the digging work. If Cable Route Plan is not available, Executing Agency for works shall carry out Joint survey with open line staff using Cable Route Tracer to identify the existing cables in the section. Cross trenches may also be done for identification of cable route. After identification of existing cables, marking to be done by using Lime Powder or Pegging & Developing pegging plan or any other means. For major works of doubling, GC, ABS, IBS, Railway Electrification, Power supply and Illuminations etc cable are to be located and shifted/re-laid on different route before commencement of earth/digging work. For ROB/RUB's work, Diversion and securing of the cables temporarily before start of the work and permanent diversion after completion of the work (as per site requirement) shall be ensured.

(e) DRM shall ensure proper coordination between various departments/ agencies undertaking any work near/ along the track. It should be ensured that all cables are located and shifted/ protected before starting the digging work.

2. (a) Before allowing the contractor to work near the tracks, the work executing agency (like SrDSTE/ SrDEN/ SrDEE or DyC8uSTE/DyCEE/DyCE, KRIDE, RE, RCIL, RVNL, GSU and State Govt authorities & other agencies etc.) shall ensure that the permission has been granted by the division to the contractor in accordance with the local instructions / JPO to work in the vicinity of the cables.

(b) Before taking up any digging activity on a particular work by any agency/organization /department, Sr. DSTE/Sr.DEE shall be approached in writing by the concerned for permission to undertake the work. Sr. DSTE/ Sr.DEE after ensuring that the concerned executing agencies/ organization/ department including the contractor have shifted /taken adequate measures for protecting the cable respond to the request for permitting the work in writing within 7 working days from the registration of request will grant the permission to work or taking additional measures for located and shifting/ protecting the cable. If such permission is delayed beyond the 7 working days it will be taken as deemed permitted.

(c) After getting the permission from S&T or Electrical department as the case may be, the relevant portion of the cable route plan / emergency sockets details in the block section shall be attached to the letter through which permission is issued to the contractor by the concerned organization/agencies / department for commencement of work. The copy of such permissions and approval or approved action plan to be circulated by Sr.DSTE/Sr.DEE to all concerned SSE/SEs including supervisors involved and connected with PWay, Works, Bridge, Security, Water Works, Operating and Safety etc. They should ensure that the contractors have fully understood the cable route plan and precautions to be taken to prevent damage to the underground cables.

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(d) The supervisor of the executing organization (SSE/P.Way, SSE/Works, SSE/Sig/CN etc) shall pass on the information to the concerned SSE/Sig. or SSE/Tele or SSE/Electrical (TRD or G) or Supervisors of PWay, Works, Bridge, Security, Water Works, Operating, Safety and RPF control or Jurisdictional RPF Post/OP etc. of the division also about the works being taken up by the contractors in their sections at least 3 days in advance of the day of the work. In addition, Engineering control, Electrical Control, Traffic Control, Security Control, TLC/TPC, Test Room shall also be informed by SSE/P.Way or SSE/Works, or Concerned Supervisor .

(e) On receiving the above information, SE/Sig or SE/Tele or SE/Electrical (TRD or G) shall visit the site on or before the date of taking up the work and issue field permission to the contractor to commence the work after checking that adequate precautions have been taken to avoid the damage to the cables. The permission to commence work shall be granted within 3 days of submission of such requests.

(f) In case of minor nature of works where shifting of cable is not required, in order to prevent damage to the cable, the Engineering contractor shall locate and take out the S&T or optical fibre cable or Electrical cable carefully from the trench and place it properly alongside at a safe location before starting the earthwork under the supervision of SSE/Sig. or SSE/Tele or SSE/Electrical (TRD or G). The cable shall be reburied soon after completion of excavation with proper care including placement of the brick over the cable under the supervision of S&T or Electrical supervisors. However, the work will be charged to the concerned engineering works.

3. (a) In case of works being taken up by the State Government, National Highway Authority etc., Electrical/Engineering department shall process for permission and estimated fund shall be deposited by the concerned government authority for shifting/protecting the cables before granting permission to work. The details of the permission given i.e., the nature of work, kilometre etc be given to the Engineering control including the contact person's number of State Government, National Highway Authority so that the work can be done in a planned manner. The permission letter shall indicate the contact numbers of S&T control/ TPC/Elect. Control. The supervisor of Contractor / Executing Agency shall have the copy of permission obtained.

(b) Some works are being carried out by contractors / vendors of Commercial department like Erection / Installation of Advertising Screens, Banners, other equipment etc. In such cases also procedure as defined above should be followed and the contractor should be liable to pay penalty in case of damage to cable of Electrical and S&T.

4. The engineering control shall keep all the information regarding any works being done near the track. S&T, Electrical control and RPF Control shall obtain this information from engineering control. These controls shall coordinate among themselves to ensure that no work is done in the vicinity of the track without proper permission. In case any cable is found while carrying out the work, the same shall be informed to engineering control /S&T test room/TPC/Electrical control immediately and further work in the area shall be stopped till the cable is identified by the divisional S&T/electrical staff. If any work is cancelled/ rescheduled, same to be informed in

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advance by engineering control to the concerned S&T staff/ executing agency to avoid wastage of manpower,

5. The concerned SE/Pway/SE/Works/SE/Sig/SE/Tele SE/Electrical (TRD or G) or RailTel supervisors supervising the work of the contractor shall ensure that the existing emergency sockets are not damaged due to their importance in providing communication during accident/emergency.

6. For all new works, cable locating and shifting should be a mandatory part of DPR and estimate. For ongoing works, works may be sanctioned for cable locating and shifting, if necessary, through contingency/supplementary/revised estimate where provision does not exist. However, in case the executing agency /division officials decide not to shift cables (due to any reason) then protection of cable shall be ensured by them during execution of the work.

7. Penalty to be imposed for damages to cable shall be as under:

Cable damaged	Penalty per location
Only Quad cable or Signalling cable	₹ 1.0 Lakh
Only OFC	₹ 1.25 Lakh
Both OFC & Quad	₹ 1.5 Lakh
Electrical Cable	₹ 1.0 Lakh

8. Penalty should be levied on the contractor when they work without permission or resort to careless working without making arrangements for protecting cables and other utilities. Based upon the local conditions and practices,

- a. Penalty as detailed in para 7 should be levied in the following cases.
 - i. When Work is carried out without prior written permission from Sr. DSTE/ Sr.DEE as detailed in para 2(b)
 - ii. When Work is carried out without prior permission from field SSE as detailed in para 2(d) or 2 (e)
 - iii. Cables are not located/ shifted / Protected as per joint survey report with the divisional S&T/Electrical department.
 - iv. Cables which have been exposed for facilitating the works are not properly secured or are damaged by the contractor or miscreant activity during the course of the work and are not reburied after completion of the work.
 - v. Any other instance of careless working leading to damage of cable in the opinion of ADRM/Sr.DSTE/Sr.DEE.
- b. For each cable cut, a joint report at the level of supervisors should be prepared on the same day and it should become the basis for levying penalty and fixing responsibility. Joint note should be forwarded by Sr.DSTE/Sr.DEE to the executive in-charge of the work. The executive in-charge of the work should act and decide on the cable cut case within 15 days under information to Sr.DSTE/Sr.DEE as the case may be. There should be provision of appeal by contractors within one month of notice for levying penalty at ADRM level. Decision of ADRM shall be final and binding upon both parties. joint note format is given in **Annexure-I**.

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- c. Necessary debit in this regard shall be raised on the department undertaking the work, who shall in turn levy the penalty on the defaulting contractor. S&T department shall raise the debits in case of damage to OFC or Quad or Signalling cable and Electrical department shall raise the debits in case of damage to Electrical cable
 - d. As per the provision in the contract agreement /Work estimate the executing department will transfer the penalty amount to the S&T/Electrical department within two months after the final decision obtained from ADRM. A proper mechanism needs to be set up in the Divisional office for ensuring recovery of penalties from defaulting agencies and their proper accountal by finance.
 - e. In case of damage by contractors of state government / National Highways etc, without taking prior permission / careless working the penalties will be advised to the coordinating department (Engineering/ Electrical department).
 - f. In case of other Govt. and/ or Private agencies taking work near railway tracks this will be implemented and ensured by suitable communication, by the coordinating department which is assigned to facilitate the permission. (Like Electrical department for power line crossings and Engineering department for track crossing). This is as per any existing board guidelines or with the approval of DRM.
9. Railways will not lodge FIR with RPF in cases of works being executed by authorized contractors of Railways who have been duly permitted to execute the works. Department undertaking work will ensure realization of penalty during the payment of final payment. In all other cases, when the cable is cut by an agency that was not permitted to execute any work, FIR should be lodged with RPF. The Execution agency to issue Identity Cards to its Supervisors and works duly mentioning the permission ref who will work near track and places working where the cables are involved. All workers shall be given protective clothing and gear with Company Logo.
10. Other than planned works being carried out by various agencies through authorized contractors of Railways / state Government etc there may be damages to the cables due to
- (a) Cable cut by Railway staff while digging in connection with random and unplanned activity.
 - (b) Cable cuts due to actions of outsiders, be it theft or interference.

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11. Cable cut by Railway staff while digging in connection with random and unplanned activity.

These include works along the track involving digging the earth not requiring traffic block or disconnection like carrying out drainage works, levelling and other open line works and are generally taken up

- a. Without information to concerned telecom staff.
- b. Without taking due precaution to avoid the cutting of telecom cables.
- c. Without appreciating the consequence of safety to train operation,
- d. With tendency to hide the incidence of cable cut & its location, in case it happens while digging.

For such works suitable deterrent action shall be recommended for erring staff as decided by Division.

12. Cable cuts due to actions of outsiders, be it theft or interference

- a) Cable cuts caused by non-railway persons are due to either intentional interference with objective of theft or sabotage or unintentional/incidental to the activities in vicinity of Railway tracks.
- b) In case of cable cuts by outsiders like farmers/ miscreants/unknown etc, RPF complaint shall be lodged and joint observation report shall be prepared by RPF along with S&T/Electrical department. Crime No. shall be obtained from RPF. The fine imposed/disposal of the case by the jurisdictional Courts shall be intimated to S&T/Electrical department.

Division shall review the cable cut cases on daily basis and action taken/ penalty imposed/ recovered shall be reviewed and recorded.

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Annexure-I

Joint Note format as per the JPO on Cable cuts issued by SWR

S.No	Description	Remarks
1	Division	
2	Station/Block section	
3	Date and time of cut	
4	Date and time of restoration	
5	Location of cable cut (Km)	
6	Cable type (OFC/Quad/Signalling/Electrical)	
7	Availability of Cable route plan for the block section on Railnet (Yes/No)	
8	Provision made in estimate for shifting/protecting the cable (Yes/No)	
9	Is cable shifted /protected by executing agency? (Yes/No)	
10	During execution of the work/cable cut:	
	(i) S&T/RCIL staff available at the spot?	
	(ii) Supervisor of Executing Agency available at the spot?	
	iii) Is contractor worked carelessly without making arrangements for protecting cables and other utilities (Yes/No.)	
11	Whether cable was in exposed condition for facilitating the works? (Yes/No)	
12	Is the cable properly secured or are damaged by the contractor or miscreant activity during the course of the work and are not reburied after completion of the work.	
13	Cable cut by Which Department? Name of the Executive Agency and Supervisor at Site	
14	Whether applied for digging permission by the user department? Y/N and If Yes, date of application	
15	Permission for digging provided by Sr. DSTE within 7 days of application or not? If so, date:	

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16	Prior information of the work at least 3 days in advance conveyed to S&T by Engg Control (Y/N)	
17	Permission for execution of work provided by concerned SSE/Tele/Sig (Y/N) within 3 days of application or not.	
18	Name of the contractor, phone No., nature of work details given to S&T by Engineering Control? If yes, when?	
19	Permission given for execution of the work to State Govt/NHAI/Other than Rly agencies by Engineering department with or without taking clearance from S&T department? If yes, when?	
20	List of gears affected	
21	Whether FIR Lodged (for cut without permission /By miscreants/outsideers) (Y/N) If yes, crime No. for the same.	
23	Whether Penalty recommended(Y/N)	
24	If no, Reason thereof	
25	Remarks & Signature, Name Designation of Rly/RCIL representative	Remarks & Signature, Name Designation of Executing Agency Representative

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Dated:22/12/2023

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भारत सरकार Government of India
रेल मंत्रालय Ministry of Railways
रेलवे बोर्ड (Railway Board)



Telecom Circular No.09/2023

सं.2021/Tele/5(2)/3-Part(1)(3425647)

नई दिल्ली, दिनांक: 12.06.2023

The GM/CMD/MD/PCAO/CAO,
All Indian Railways, KRCL, PUs, CORE, COFMOW
(As per standard list)

The DGs/Directors
RDSO, NAIR, All CTIs

Sub.: Procedure for undertaking digging work in the vicinity of Signalling, Electrical and Telecommunication cables

Ref.: JPO issued vide Board's letter No.2003/Tele/RCIL/1Pt.IX dated 24.06.2013 (Telecom Circular No.17/2013)

A Joint Procedure Order (JPO) for undertaking digging work in the vicinity of underground Signalling, Electrical and Telecommunication cables was issued last vide Board's letter No.2003/Tele/RCIL/1Pt.IX dated 24.06.2013 (Telecom Circular No.17/2013). Notwithstanding the provisions contained in the JPO for protection of cables, a significant number of cable-cut incidents and practical difficulties in implementation of certain provisions of the said JPO were reported.

Board, therefore, constituted a committee of SAG officers to revisit the JPO. Based on the recommendations of the committee, Board (MI) has approved broad guidelines for procedure to be adopted by Zonal Railways for protection of cables while undertaking digging work in their vicinity (**Annexure**). These guidelines are in supersession of JPO issued vide reference above.

Zonal Railways are requested to issue local instructions/guidelines/JPO implementing these broad guidelines within a month of issue of this letter. Zonal Railways may also ensure that these local instructions/guidelines/JPO are also made part of all tenders for works in the vicinity of cables in accordance with the instructions issued by Civil Engineering Dte of Railway Board vide letter No.2023/CE-I/EDCE(G)/Misc. Dated 18.04.2023.

DA: As above

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(राकेश रंजन)

कार्यकारी निदेशक (दूरसंचार विकास)

दूरभाष: 011-47843012, 030-43012

ई.मेल: edtd@rb.railnet.gov.in

Copy to:

1. PSO to M(I) for kind information of Member/Infra
2. ED/SD, EDEE/M, EDCE/G, ED/GS/C-II for information & ensuring implementation of guidelines in letter & spirit
3. PCSTE, PCE & PCEE, All Indian Railways

Annexure**Guidelines for protection of cables while doing work its vicinity**

1. Cable route marking for all types of cable must be made available block section wise on Railnet.
2. Before allowing the contractor to work near the tracks, the work executing agency (like SrDSTE/SrDEN/SrDEE or DyCSTE/DyCEE/DyCE etc.) shall ensure that the permission has been granted by the division to the contractor in accordance with the local instructions / JPO to work in the vicinity of the cables. Zonal railways shall devise suitable mechanism and timelines for the obtaining/granting such permission.
3. In case of works being taken up by the State Government, National Highway Authority etc., zonal railways shall devise mechanism for shifting the cables or for proper protection of cables before granting permission to work.
4. The engineering control shall keep all the information regarding any works being done near the track. S&T and electrical control shall obtain this information from engineering control. These controls shall coordinate among themselves to ensure that no work is done in the vicinity of the track without proper permission.
5. The concerned SE/P.Way/SE/Works/SE/Sig/SE/Tele SE/Electrical (TRD or G) or RailTel supervisors supervising the work of the contractor shall ensure that the existing emergency sockets are not damaged due to their importance in providing communication during accident/emergency.
6. For all new works, cable shifting should be a mandatory part of DPR and estimate. For ongoing works, Zonal Railways may sanction works for cable shifting if necessary through contingency/supplementary/revised estimate where provision does not exist. However, in case zonal railways decide not to shift cables (due to any reason) then protection of cable shall be ensured by the zonal railways during execution of the work.
7. Penalty to be imposed for damages to cable shall be as under:

Cable damaged	Penalty per location
Only Quad cable or Signaling cable	₹ 1.0 Lakh
Only OFC	₹ 1.25 Lakh
Both OFC & Quad	₹ 1.5 Lakh
Electrical Cable	₹ 1.0 Lakh







8. Penalty should be levied on the contractor when they work without permission or resort to careless working without making arrangements for protecting cables and other utilities. Based upon the local conditions and practices, zonal railway shall devise its own conditions for examining and levying penalty. For each cable cut, a joint report at the level of supervisors should be prepared on the same day and it should become the basis for levying penalty and fixing responsibility. Joint note should be forwarded by SrDSTE/SrDEE to the executive in-charge of the work. The executive in-charge of the work should act and decide on the cable cut case within 15 days under information to SrDSTE/SrDEE as the case may be. There should be provision of appeal by contractors within one month of notice for levying penalty at ADRM level. Decision of ADRM shall be final and binding upon both parties.
9. Railways will not lodge FIR with RPF in cases of works being executed by authorized contractors of Railways who have been duly permitted to execute the works.
10. Zonal Railways shall issue local instructions/JPO for protection of cables while undertaking works in the vicinity of railway tracks in line with this guideline. Zonal Railways shall also ensure that such instructions become part of their tender document within one month of the issue of the local instructions. Suitable action against erring officials shall also be incorporated in these instructions if the same is not adhered to.

    