

SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

Settlement of Disputes and Conciliation of disputes

1. All disputes and differences of any kind whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the contract, whether during the currency of the contract or after its completion and whether before or after the determination of the contract, shall be referred by any of the parties to the concerned "Chief Materials Manager (CMM) " or "Divisional Railway Manager" or "Executive Director" through "Notice of Dispute". CMM or Divisional Railway Manager or Executive Director shall, within 30 days after receipt of "Notice of Dispute", notify the name of sole conciliator to the parties,

The Conciliator shall assist the parties to reach an amicable settlement in an independent and impartial manner within the terms of contract.

If the parties reach agreement on settlement of the dispute, they shall draw up a written settlement agreement duly signed by parties and conciliator. When the parties sign the settlement agreement, it shall be final and binding on the parties.

The parties shall not initiate, during the conciliation proceedings, any arbitral or judicial proceedings in respect of dispute that is the subject matter of the conciliation proceedings.

The conciliation proceedings shall be terminated:

- a) By the signing of the settlement agreement, on the date of agreement: or
- b) By written declaration of the conciliator, after consultation with the parties, to the effect that further efforts at conciliation are no longer justified, on the date of declaration: or
- c) By a written declaration of any party to the conciliator to the effect that the conciliation proceedings are terminated, on the date of declaration:

2. Matters Finally Determined by the Railway: All disputes and differences of any kind whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the contract, whether during the currency of the contract or after its completion and whether before or after the determination of the contract, shall be referred by the contractor to the General Manager (for the purpose of para 1 the term General Manager shall imply Additional General Managers of Zonal Railways , General Managers for Production Units, Additional Member (Railway Stores), Member of the Railway Board, Head of the Organization in case of contracts entered into by other organizations under the Ministry of Railways) and the General manager shall, within 120 days after receipt of the representation, make and notify decisions on all matters referred to by the Contractor in writing. Provided that matters for which provision has been made in any Clause of the Special or General Conditions of the Contract shall be deemed as 'excepted matters' matters not arbitrable) and decisions of the Railway authority, thereon shall be final and binding on the Contractor; provided further that "excepted matters' shall stand specifically excluded from the purview of the Arbitration Clause.
- Provided further that where Railways has raised the dispute, para 2 shall not apply.

3. Demand for Arbitration:

- (i) In the event of any dispute or difference between the parties hereto as to the construction or operation of this contract, or the respective rights and liabilities of the parties on any matter in question, dispute or difference on any account, or if the Railway fails to make a decision within 120 days (as referred in Para 2), then and in any such case, but except in any of the "excepted matters" referred to in Clause 2 of these Conditions, parties to the contract, after 120 days but within 180 days of their presenting their final claim on disputed matters , shall demand in writing that the dispute or difference be referred to arbitration. Provided that where the claim is raised by Railways para 3(1) shall not apply.

(ii) (a) The demand for arbitration shall specify the matters which are in question, or subject of the dispute or difference as also the amount of claim item-wise. Only such dispute or difference. in respect of which the demand has been made, together with counter claims or set off, shall be referred to arbitration and other matters shall not be included in the reference,

(b) The parties may waive off the applicability of Sub-Section 12(5) of Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 (as amended), if they agree for such waiver in writing, after dispute having arisen between them

(iii) (a) The Arbitration proceedings shall be assumed to have commenced from the day, a written and valid demand for arbitration is received by the Railway.

(b) The claimant shall submit his claims stating the facts supporting the claims along with all the relevant documents and the relief or remedy sought against each claim within a period of 30 days from the date of appointment of the Arbitral Tribunal.

(c) Respondent shall submit its defense statement and counter claim(s), if any, within a period of 60 days of receipt of copy of claims from Tribunal, unless otherwise extension has been granted by Arbitral Tribunal.

(d) Place of Arbitration: The place of arbitration would be within the geographical limits of the Division of the Railway where the cause of action arose or the Headquarters of the concerned Railway or any other place with the written consent of both the parties.

(iv) No new claim shall be added during proceedings by either party. However, a party may amend or supplement the original claim or defence thereof during the course of arbitration proceedings subject to acceptance by Tribunal having due regard to the delay in making it.

4. Obligation During Pendency of Arbitration: Supplies under the contract shall, unless otherwise directed by the Purchase Officer, continue during the arbitration proceedings, and no payment due or payable by the Railway shall be withheld on account of such proceedings,

provided, however, it shall be open for Arbitral Tribunal to consider and decide whether or not, supplies should continue during arbitration proceedings.

5. Appointment of Arbitrator

5 (a) Appointment of Arbitrator where applicability of section 12 (5) of Arbitration and Conciliation Act has been waived off:

- (i) In cases where the total value of all claims in question added together does not exceed Rs. 1,00,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore only), the Arbitral Tribunal shall consist of a Sole Arbitrator who shall be a Gazetted Officer of Railway not below Junior Administrative Grade, nominated by the General Manager. The sole arbitrator shall be appointed within 60 days from the day when a written and valid demand for arbitration is received by General Manager.
- (ii) In cases where the total value of all claims in question added together exceeds Rs.1,00,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore only), the Arbitral Tribunal shall consist of a panel of three Gazetted Railway Officers not below Junior Administrative Grade or 2 Railway Gazetted Officers not below Junior Administrative Grade and a retired Railway Officer, retired not below the rank of Senior Administrative Grade Officer, as the arbitrators. For this purpose, the Railway will send a panel of at least four (4) names of Gazetted Railway Officers of one or more departments of the Railway which may also include the name(s) of retired Railway Officer(s) empanelled to work as Railway Arbitrator to the Contractor within 60 days from the day when a written and valid demand for arbitration is received by the General Manager.

Contractor will be asked to suggest to General Manager at least 2 names out of the panel for appointment as Contractor's nominee within 30 days from the date of dispatch of the request by Railway. The General Manager shall appoint at least one out of them as the Contractor's nominee and will, also simultaneously appoint the balance number of arbitrators either from the panel or from outside the panel, duly indicating the 'presiding arbitrator' from amongst the 3 arbitrators so appointed. General Manager shall complete this exercise of appointing the Arbitral Tribunal within 30 days from the receipt of the

names of Contractor's nominees. While nominating the arbitrators, it will be necessary to ensure that one of them is from the Accounts Department. An officer of Selection Grade of the Accounts Department may be considered of equal status to the officers in Senior Administrative Grade of other departments of the Railway for the purpose of appointment of arbitrator.

- (iii) The serving railway officer working in arbitral tribunal in the ongoing arbitration cases as per clause 5(a)(i) and clause 5(a)(ii) above, can continue as arbitrator in the tribunal even after his retirement.

5 (b) Appointment of Arbitrator where applicability of Section 12 (5) of Arbitration and Conciliation Act has not been waived off:

- (i) In cases where the total value of all claims in question added together does not exceed Rs.50,00,000/- (Rupees Fifty Lakh only), the Arbitral Tribunal shall consist of a Retired Railway Officer, retired not below the rank of Senior Administrative Grade Officer, as the arbitrator. For this purpose, the Railway will send a panel of at least four (4) names of retired Railway Officer(s) empanelled to work as Railway Arbitrator duly indicating their retirement dates to the Contractor within 60 days from the day when a written and valid demand for arbitration is received by the General Manager.

Contractor will be asked to suggest to General Manager at least 2 names out of the panel for appointment as arbitrator within 30 days from the date of dispatch of the request by Railway. The General Manager shall appoint at least one out of them as the arbitrator.

- (ii) In cases where the total value of all claims in question added together exceeds Rs.50,00,000/- (Rupees Fifty Lakh only), the Arbitral Tribunal shall consist of three (3) retired Railway Officers (retired not below the rank of Senior Administrative Grade Officer). For this purpose, the Railway will send a panel of at least four (4) names of retired Railway Officer(s) empanelled to work as Railway Arbitrators duly indicating their retirement date to the Contractor within 60 days from the day when a written and valid demand for arbitration is received by the General Manager.

Contractor will be asked to suggest to General Manager at least 2 names out of the panel for appointment as Contractor's nominee within 30 days from the date of dispatch of the request by Railway. The General Manager shall appoint at least one out of them as the Contractor's nominee and will, also simultaneously appoint the balance number of arbitrators either from the panel or from outside the panel, duly indicating the 'Presiding Arbitrator' from amongst the 3 arbitrators so appointed. General Manager shall complete this exercise of appointing the Arbitral Tribunal within 30 days from the receipt of the names of Contractor's nominees. While nominating the arbitrators, it will be necessary to ensure that one of them has served in the Accounts Department.

5 (C) (i) If the contractor does not suggest his nominees for the arbitral tribunal within the prescribed timeframe, the General manager shall proceed for appointment of arbitral tribunal within 30 days of the expiry of such time provided to contractor.

(ii) If one or more of the arbitrators appointed as above refuses to act as arbitrator, withdraws from his office as arbitrator, or vacates his/their office/offices or is/are unable or unwilling to perform his functions as arbitrator for any reason whatsoever or dies or in the opinion of the General Manager fails to act without undue delay, the General Manager shall appoint new arbitrator/arbitrators to act in his/their place in the same manner in which the earlier arbitrator/arbitrators had been appointed. Such re-constituted Tribunal may, at its discretion, proceed with the reference from the stage at which it was left by the previous arbitrator (s).

(a) Fast Track procedure: Parties to the arbitration agreement, may, at any stage either before or at the time of appointment of the arbitral tribunal, agree in writing to have their dispute resolved by fast-track procedure specified in Section 29B of the Arbitration & Conciliation Act, 1996, as amended.

(b) Before proceeding into the merits of any dispute, the Arbitral Tribunal shall first decide and pass its orders over any plea submitted/objections raised by any party, if any, regarding appointment of Arbitral Tribunal, validity of arbitration agreement, jurisdiction and scope of the Tribunal to deal with the dispute (s) submitted to arbitration, applicability of time 'limitation' to any dispute, any violation of agreed procedure regarding conduct of the arbitral proceedings or plea for interim measures of protection and record its orders in day to day proceedings, A copy of the proceedings duly signed by all the members of tribunal should be provided to both the parties.

iii.(i) Qualification of Arbitrator (s):

(a) Serving Gazetted Railway Officers of not below JA Grade level.

(b) Retired Railway Officers not below SA Grade level, one year after his date of retirement,

(c) Age of arbitrator at the time of appointment shall be below 70 years.

(ii) An arbitrator may be appointed notwithstanding the total number of arbitration cases in which he has been appointed in the past.

(iii) While appointing arbitrator(s) under Sub-Clause 5(a)(i), 5(a)(ii), 5(b)i) & 5(b)(ii) above, due care shall be taken that he/they is/are not the one/those who had an opportunity to deal with the matters to which the contract relates or who in the course of his/their duties as Railway servant(s) expressed views on all or any of the matters under dispute or differences. A certification to this effect as per annexure (given after this para) shall be taken from Arbitrators. The proceedings of the Arbitral tribunal or the award made by such Tribunal will, however, not be invalid merely for the reason that one or more arbitrator had, in the course of his service, opportunity to deal with the matters to which the contract relates or who in the course of his/their duties expressed views on all or any of the matters under dispute.

Annexure (Ref para (iii) of Clause 5(c) (iii))

Certification by persons under consideration to be nominated as Arbitrator.

1. Name

2. Contact Details:

3. I hereby certify that I have retired from Railways w.e.f. _____ in _____ grade.

Or

I hereby certify that I am serving Railway Officer and am presently posted as _____ in grade.

4. I have no any past or present relationship in relation to the subject matter in dispute, whether financial, business, professional or other kind.

Or

I have past or present relationship in relation to the subject matter in dispute, whether financial, business, professional or other kind. The list of such interests is as under:

5. I have no any past or present relationship with or interest in any of the parties whether financial, business, professional or other kind, which is likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my independence or impartiality in terms of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996.

Or

I have past or present relationship with or interest in any of the parties whether financial, business, professional or other kind, which is likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my independence or impartiality in terms of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996. The details of such relationship or interest are as under:

6. There are no concurrent circumstances which are likely to affect my ability to devote sufficient time to the arbitration and in particular to finish the entire arbitration within twelve months.

Or

There are circumstances which are likely to affect my ability to devote sufficient time to the arbitration and in particular to finish the entire arbitration within twelve months. The list of such circumstances is as under:

5 (d) (i): The arbitral award shall state item wise, the sum and reasons upon which it is based. The analysis and reasons shall be detailed enough so that the award could be inferred there from.

(ii): A party may apply for corrections of any computational errors, any typographical or clerical errors or any other error of similar nature occurring in the award of a Tribunal and interpretation of a specific point of award to Tribunal within 60 days of receipt of the award.

(iii): A party may apply to Tribunal within 60 days of receipt of award to make an additional award as to claims presented in the arbitral proceedings but omitted from the arbitral award.

6. In case of the Tribunal, comprising of three members, any ruling on award shall be made by a majority of members of Tribunal. In the absence of such a majority, the views of the Presiding Arbitrator shall prevail.

7. Where the arbitral award is for the payment of money, no interest shall be payable on whole or any part of the money for any period till the date on which the award is made.

8. (a) The cost of arbitration shall be borne by the respective parties. The cost shall inter-alia include fee of the arbitrator(s), as per the rates fixed by Railway Board from time to time and the fee shall be borne equally by both the parties. Further, the fee payable to the arbitrator(s) would be governed by the instructions issued on the subject by Railway Board from time to time irrespective of the fact whether the arbitrator(s) is/are appointed by the Railway Administration or by the court of law unless specifically directed by Hon'ble Court otherwise on the matter.

(b) Sole arbitrator shall be entitled for 25% extra fee over the fee prescribed by Railway Board from time to time.

9. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006 provides parties to a dispute (where one of the parties is a Micro or Small Enterprise) to make a reference to Micro and Small

Enterprises Facilitation Council, if the dispute is in regard to any amount due under Section 17 of the MSMED Act, 2006. In case a Micro or Small] Enterprise, being a party to dispute, makes a reference under the provisions in MSMED Act 2006, the provisions of the MSMED Act 2006, shall prevail over conciliation and arbitration agreement as contained in the contract.

10. Subject to the provisions of the aforesaid Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 (as amended from time to time) and the rules thereunder and relevant para of IRS Conditions of Contract and any statutory modifications thereof shall apply to the appointment of arbitrators and arbitration proceedings under this Clause.