

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)

No.2004/M(L)/466//7101(SPAD)

New Delhi, dated 01 -01-2013

**General Managers
All Indian Railways**

Sub: Incidents of Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD)

Ref: Board (MM)'s letter no. 2010/M(L)/466/Misc dt. 25.4.2012

There were three serious incidents of SPAD in the last week. The common thread between the three is that the practice of calling signals between the members of the crew, after duly observing the signal has not been followed. Even in other cases of SPAD, it is revealed that trains are being run only on the basis of only one member of the crew observing a signal. The second line of defence created by having a crew of two persons has thus been neutralised. GR 3.83 requires that LP and ALP would exchange signal after individually observing the signal aspect. It is reproduced below:

"3.83 Assistance of the engine crew regarding signals: –

(1) The Loco Pilot and the Assistant Loco Pilot, shall identify each signals affecting the movement of the train as soon as it becomes visible. They shall call out the aspects of the signal to each other.

(2) The Assistant Loco Pilot shall, when not otherwise engaged, assist the Loco Pilot in exchanging signals as required.


(3) The provisions of sub rules (1) and (2) shall, in no way, absolve the Loco Pilot of his responsibility in respect of observance in compliance with the signals."

2. Please conduct a drive for the next 15 days, wherein each LP and ALP should be personally contacted by a Loco Inspector and counselled regarding the importance of observance and compliance with signals. ALPs should also be clearly made to understand that they are a member of the engine crew and responsible for compliance of signals. If signal visibility is better from the LP side, they should go to that side to observe the signal. In case they find that the LP has failed to react to a signal aspect, there should be no hesitation in using the Assistant's Emergency Brake to bring the train to a stop.

3. Visibility of signals is another important aspect which needs to be re-examined. On diesel locomotives, the visibility is different for LP and ALP and also depends on whether the locomotive is being driven with long hood or short hood leading. A study done on North-Eastern Railway indicated that visibility of signals from LP/ALP side was zero in many cases. This indicates that the system of Signal Sighting Committees is not serving its intended purpose and their reports as they exist now cannot be relied upon. In order to rectify the situation, the following action may be taken forthwith:

- i. Conduct footplate inspection of each and every section of your Railway by a committee consisting of representatives of Mechanical, Traffic and Signal Branches.
- ii. The above inspections should be conducted in different diesel loco configurations - long hood leading and short hood leading for right hand and left hand drive diesel locomotive separately.
- iii. For each section and configuration, the signal sighting distance for the LP and ALP should be recorded.
- iv. Short term and long term solutions should be arrived at based on the physical signal sighting distance. The solutions should be based on minimum sighting distance for LP or ALP in any of the configurations. Short term solutions may consist of measures like imposing speed restriction whereas long-term measures would comprise shifting of signals, providing repeater signals, clearing of visibility obstructions etc.

4. Considering the importance of this issue, I would request due priority to be given and the above exercises completed in the next one month keeping me advised on a weekly basis.


(Keshav Chandra)
Member Mechanical
Railway Board