



General Body Meeting of IRAS Association held in Railway Board on 09.08.2018

I. Address by Financial Commissioner (Railways)

1. Taking advantage of the presence of the Financial Commissioner, who was present for the Technical seminar, Executive Director/ Finance Commercial requested FC to address the officers gathered, before the formal beginning of the GBM.
2. In his address, the FC made a few succinct points which are listed below:
 - a. Present times require the IRAS officers to be more pro-active and not reactive. This means that officers should take initiatives related to all aspect of Railway working instead of being desk-bound and waiting for issues to be brought before them for financial advice
 - b. IRAS officers should also seek to gain as much experience as possible in all areas of Accounts working. The fact was that IRAS Officers tend to miss out on awareness about the Revenue side of Finance and Accounts unless they got a chance to work in Traffic Accounts.
 - c. With more and more delegation of financial powers coming the way of GMs and DRMs, it was imperative that Finance Officers upgraded themselves professionally to be able to render appropriate advice to their Executive.
 - d. Pressure on Finance officers existed at all levels, even though it was of different character and from different quarters depending upon the level. It was, therefore, important for the Finance officers to be fair and reasonable yet firm. For this updating of knowledge of rules and procedures was an absolute essentiality.
 - e. At times there may be a need to say 'No!' to certain proposals which were very close to the heart of the proposer. It was important to convey the concerns from financial propriety perspective in an appropriate way so that the concerned authority or officer would appreciate the advice instead of considering the Finance officer negative.
 - f. System improvement was an on-going process in the Railways and IRAS Officers should not hesitate to give their suggestions for the same whenever possible. All valid suggestions and ideas will be acted upon by the Board.



3. He concluded by assuring all officers of his full support, as has been the past tradition, and emphasised that he would take care that no officers will be allowed to be victimised for doing the right thing. Even errors of judgement without any mala fide will not be made an excuse to penalise officers.
 4. Executive Director/ Finance Commercial thanked the FC on behalf of all the officers present for his words of guidance for the Service and also for his words of assurance of support.
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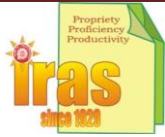


II. Minutes of the General Body Meeting

1. Secretary General of IRAS Association and Executive Director/ Finance Commercial, Dr. Madhukar Sinha, welcomed the members of IRAS to the General Body Meeting, the first of the year 2018.
2. He requested Shri Vijay Kumar, Additional Member/Budget and President of IRAS Association to Chair the GBM.
3. Secretary General then made a short presentation regarding two issues for which the IRAS General Body had been concerned for some time. The points made in this regard were as follows:

a. Qualification for posts of Director (Finance) in PSUs of Indian Railways (IR)

- ▲ Presently, in all PESB selections for the post of Director (Finance) of any PSU, there is requirement that the candidate should have a professional qualification such as CA/ ICWA/ MBA
- ▲ No weightage is given to the long years of experience in various capacities as Accounts and Finance Officers in the largest civilian Department of the Government of India
- ▲ IRAS Officers have the unique distinction of possessing the ability to conduct Finance scrutiny of both expenditure and earning proposals
- ▲ Most Railway PSUs work primarily for the Railways and further the business of rail transportation; as such, an IRAS officer is most suited to understand and further the interests of the PSU as well as the IR
- ▲ Even CAs and ICWAs, who would meet the criterion of length of time as experience, would have obtained their qualifications not only working as Article clerks while taking the relevant exams, but were also permitted in their professional rules to study fulltime in their graduation and other courses and take the exams, even before starting to work as professional accountants
- ▲ IRAS Officers have held these posts in many PSUs of the Government of India and of State Governments and have gone to head such institutions with considerable success
- ▲ It is akin to shifting the goalpost midway the game and hence should be



removed immediately. All such Director/Finance posts of PSUs of Indian Railways should be opened to IRAS officers without the criteria of an MBA being attached as a qualification.

- ▲ The recent failure of the PESB in finding a suitable candidate for IRCTC, RVNL and DFCCIL because of the very specific job requirements in these organisations is a definite pointer to the relevance of IRAS in such organisations.
- ▲ Even the requirement of MBA is flawed in its present form:
 - ☞ The MBA qualification is mandated to be a full-time MBA.
 - ☞ No distinction is made between full-time MBA of top-rated University and a lower rated MBA.
 - ☞ Further, an MBA with compulsory attendance cannot be considered non-qualifying.
 - ☞ CAs and ICWAs also pursue their professional qualifications while working as articled clerks.
 - ☞ In any case, when the UGC and the Government of India recognise distance education as an effective method of continuing education and an acceptable approach to skill up-gradation, to rule it out as a valid qualification is arbitrary and bad in law.

b. Delay in promotion of IRAS Officers to JAG on both ad hoc and regular bases

- ▲ Promotion of IRAS Officers to JAG on confirmed and ad hoc bases is badly delayed
- ▲ As on date, 16 Officers of the 2008 Batch of IRAS officers were held up on this account.
- ▲ Directly inducted IRAS Officers came into service after successfully qualifying through one of the toughest recruitment examinations in the world.
- ▲ They joined the service and the IR with many hopes and aspirations.
- ▲ As compared to them, the “Group B” Officers of IR including of Accounts



Department are never recruited directly from the Market.

- ☞ They are inducted first of all as Group C or D functionaries and then rise through the ranks after competing through a much smaller catchment.
 - ☞ In fact, the selection to Group B is not even at a pan-IR level and as such is similar to a local examination.
 - ☞ The effort to lay claim of parity with directly recruited IRAS Officers in seniority is unfounded and needs to be rejected summarily.
- ▲ JAG confirmation of IRAS officers should not be held up on the plea that a Court case is going on.

4. After much discussion, actively participated by many senior IRAS officers, the two resolutions were unanimously passed as follows:

Resolution – 1

The General Body of the IRAS Association protests against the prejudicial manner in which an academic qualification has been added to the sole mandatory professional qualification for the post of Director (Finance) in all PSUs, especially Railway PSUs, without taking into consideration the overriding experience of the IRAS as the premier Accounts and Finance Service of the Government of India and resolves that the IR Management be petitioned to strongly take up this matter with the Department of Public Enterprises to suitably alter the qualification requirements for the posts of Director (Finance) in all CPSEs, especially the Railway PSUs, so as to give due consideration to candidature of IRAS officers to such posts based upon their job profile and professional experience.

Resolution – 2

The General Body of the IRAS Association expresses its strong resentment at denial of promotion to its members to JAG on confirmed and ad hoc bases on account of a claim to inter se seniority by promotee officers from Group B cadres and resolves that the IR Management be strongly petitioned to remove discriminating orders issued due to incorrect understanding of rules and facts.

5. It was decided that the resolutions will be communicated to the IR Management by the Association.

6. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.