

Local rcles



# ***“Improving Railway Reservation Systems”***

Collective inputs from over 65,000 Citizens in circle

**“Make Railways Better”**

***(Current State, Issues, Root Causes and Proposed Solutions)***

***January 5, 2015***



## Improving Railway Reservation Systems

### **Executive Summary**

Booking a train ticket standing in a queue or online has been a challenge for the common man. Though the Reservation Systems have gotten better over the years, a lot more needs to be done on this front to make booking of train tickets easier and transparent. The 65,000+ strong citizen community "Make Railways Better" online has come together to collectively identify the key issues, root causes and solutions for Improving the Indian Railways Reservation System and the community expects that the Ministry of Railways will work towards implementing the identified solutions.

### **Issues and Root Causes Identified:**

1. Despite latest upgrades, IRCTC website is slow and hard to transact in peak hours
2. No graphical visibility of Free seats/Births on IRCTC website to pick and choose as per your convenience
3. Increasing booking charges by IRCTC
4. Many times money gets deducted but the ticket is not booked on the IRCTC website
5. The refund process on the IRCTC website is very lengthy
6. Tough to even login during the Tatkal Hours to book the tickets
7. Number of seats reserved for Tatkal are low compared to Need
8. Tatkal tickets are sold out within minutes of opening up (while agents can get them)
9. Long queues at the ticket counters
10. Inefficient staff at the ticket counters
11. Number of ticket windows not in right proportion to citizen demand
12. Agents have a quota system which helps them block large number of seats
13. The VIP/railway quota system is grossly misused
14. Senior Citizens and handicapped persons are also allotted Upper Berth by the system
15. No provision of buying platform tickets online
16. Cancellation charges too low, due to which people block the seats and cancel at last minute, depriving a needy person

### **Solutions Identified:**

1. IRCTC website should be upgraded to the latest technology
2. People should be able to select seats graphically like in airlines
3. The refund process should be made quicker
4. Number of seats in the Tatkal quota should be increased
5. There should be a refund system for Tatkal tickets also



6. Ticketing agent system should be abolished
7. Agents should not be allowed to book Tatkal Tickets
8. Tickets issued should always have seat numbers assigned to them
9. Platform tickets should also be available online
10. Automatic platform ticket vending machines should be installed on stations
11. A special preference needs to be given to sick, handicapped and senior citizens in seat allotment
12. VIP and employee quota should be reduced and should be effectively managed
13. Group booking facility should be provided
14. Post offices should be used to sell railway tickets
15. More ticket windows should be opened on the stations to disperse the crowd
16. Ticketing staff at stations should be trained with KRAs assigned to drive focus on performance than procedures.

### **Improving Railway Reservation System – A few citizen posts and comments:**

1. First the government should analyze what is the demand and supply ratio between passengers and available tickets. We need to first expand our infrastructure means introduction of new trains and extension of bogies for present trains to meet the ticket requirements of the travelers. The present system is not at all sufficient for the present and for the future – **Bhavani Devi**
2. Tatkal system is a mess - We should shift to price dynamic system (e.g high prices 6 months prior to departure, average prices 2 months prior to departure, high prices in last 10 days) like we have in airlines for all AC classes. The cancellation on these should be higher. This will provide a good revenue to Railways as well as allow the elite class to pay more for the tickets that are extremely dear to them and the middle class can get the tickets at a cheaper rate. Moreover with dynamic pricing, you can add more bogies to bring down the prices – **Sumit Desai**
3. During on-line booking and even on ticket window the graphical picture of availability of seats must be visible to the passenger booking the tickets – **Jagdish Sharma**
4. Bringing visibility of booking & Travel between stations and disallow quota system at different stations. Allow WL to be confirmed at the subsequent stations if the berths are not available at the Joining Station – **Srinivasulu Gavirneni**
5. Reduce quota for VIP, rule for waiting should remain same for window ticket and online ticket that make reduce load on window. More over quota system apply for window ticket and online ticket and ticket booked by agent that also helpful for online booking for tatkal – **Vikas Gupta**
6. Bandwidth of IRCTC server should be so increased that during peak hours every person who login to IRCTC site gets access to it his ticket is booked. At present during



peak hours person who logins to IRCTC site does not get success and at the same time reservation counters of railway get access to it and broker get the tickets through railway booking clerks, if every person gets access to IRCTC site than nobody will go to brokers for tickets – **Karan Chahar**

7. Senior citizens, ladies above 50 yrs of age and handicapped should automatically be given lower births – **Karan Chahar**
8. I dont think it is a big issue to make this. Platform tkts and even the open tkts (unreserved journey) must also be bought online – **Stephen Jayard**
9. Automatic ticket vending machines - payable with debit or credit cards with pin. If possible with bank notes and coins – **Shankar Karanilam**
10. 100% digitization with 120% capacity with all possible features is the solution to many of problems relating to reservations. Any private kiosk interested in providing reservation should be authorized to do so for fixed service charges from the customer based on certain terms and conditions. Fast automatic transfer of funds from vendor to railways can be ensured in such cases cutting down on time taken for online reservation – **Virendra Goel**
11. There is significant increase in no of travellers by train in last few years but trains and coaches were not increased in the same ratio – **Vinay Kulkarni**
12. The existing rules & regulations seem to be OK . But their implementation needs improvement – **Aravinda Kumaran**
13. IRCTC website is slow and outdated and Tough to even login during the early hours to book tatkal tickets – **Vijay Maskara**
14. DEBIT cards should be accepted at reservation counters instead of people carrying cash – **Pramod Kumar**