CHAPTER – VIII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

a) Collective Bargaining through staff council

b) Participative Management

c) Committee Participation

d) Welfare Facilities and Social Security
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

There is a greater divergence of industrial relations systems as a result of the divergent economic, social, political and cultural environments. However, the basic aim of every organization is to maintain industrial peace and harmony to achieve organizational objectives. Congenial relation is a pre-requisite for the operational and non-operational productivity. Indian Railways having prime significance in service sector of the Indian economy have built up a model framework of labour relations. Diesel Locomotive Works, Varanasi a unit of Indian Railways follows the same practices as directed by Railway Board and so on.

Now, we shall present the main findings related to collective bargaining through staff council, workers participation in management, committee participation and the welfare facilities & social security systems prevailing in the unit under study.

a). Collective Bargaining Through Staff Council

It is surprising to mention that there is not a single trade union in DLW whereas in Railways there are numerous trade union bodies functioning at national, regional, divisional and shop level. The negotiating task on behalf of employees is handled by the Staff Council. The Council maintains and develops labour management relation through collective bargaining process on matters of mutual interest of the employees and the DLW.
The Staff Council brings questions in connection with employees conditions of service to the notice of administration, matters of common interest connected with the working of the undertaking may be discussed with a view to improving efficiency and the council may function as welfare committee and improves all welfare activities. However, we visualise that the council functions as an advisory body to the administration.

The staff council in the unit under study consists of 08 elected members as per the constituencies in the organizational setup besides eight nominated members of the management. The scope of the Council is at the levels of undertaking, railway board, tribunal and divisional.

At the unit level the Staff Council is intended to promote measures for relations between the management and workers and to that end to comment and suggest means and ways for the benefit of the internal masses and the organization. It is expected that the Council will meet once in a month to discuss and solve the problems. To discuss and reach on amicable settlement, the council participates in a quarterly meeting organized with the management in practice now-a-days.

In bipartite meetings the administration of DLW is represented by a team of eight members while the Staff Council members with equal number participate in the meeting from employees side. For these meetings the Chief Mechanical Engineer is the Chairman. Sometimes, the GM also participates in such meeting. The meeting has its agenda, formally circulated among all the concerned members.
During the period of five years under study, the staff council raised 447 issues with management. The issues were both financial and non-financial. The study shows that the issues related to incentives overtime, welfare facilities, working conditions, etc. were discussed and decided in the meetings at the organizational level. Sometime individual grievances were also the part of the agenda and taken up for redressal.

In the year 1997-98 highest number of grievances i.e. 124 were taken whereas only 74 issues were raised during the year 1999-2000 being minimal. Out of the total 447 matters taken up 57 were financial, 77 related to working conditions, 70 of welfare facilities and so on. About 90% of the issues reached to an amicable settlement in the meeting whereas 10% issues remained unresolved which are referred to the Railway Board or raised at the tripartite meeting.

As per the time schedule there should be one meeting between the staff council and Railway Board along with DLW representatives within 1½ years to put forward and decide those matters which remain unresolved at the unit level or for which the DLW administration is not empowered. Within the period of our study only two such meetings have taken place.

As per the agenda, the Staff Council raised in all 28 issues with the Railway Board. Out of these five were fully decided and finalised while three issues were partially decided. The study shows that half of the issues remained undecided. In these matters, the Board was of the view that the issue should be taken at the unit level and two matters were
dropped totally. Among undecided question, majority of the issues i.e. 82% related to promotion, upgradation, creation of posts, etc.

It is worthwhile, to mention that raising of status of the Staff Council emerged in the meeting with the Railway Board. As it has the status of an advisory body, hence it is necessary to upgrade it to that of a trade union by amending the extent provisions. Actually the trade union office bearers are exempted from the breach of criminal and civil breach of contract under the provision of the Trade Union Act, 1926 which is not available to Staff Council office bearers. However, this very question of raising the status of Staff Council is still hanging.

b). Participative Management

Workers participation in management has effectively been put into practice at the DLW structure and content since 1976. It is practised through shop council and joint council. The functions of Councils are informative, consultative, associative and administrative.

There are four shop councils in the unit under study of Transport Division, Engine Division, Equipment Division and Production Office and Tool Room. Regarding the constitution of Transport and Engine Division Shop Council five members are nominated by the administration side while six members are sent by Staff Council to each of the shop councils. In case of Equipment Division and Production Office four members are nominated by administration and equal members come from Staff Council. The Shop Councils are basically entrusted in the increasing
production, productivity and overall efficiency of the shops/departments in the unit under study.

As there is one Joint Council as per the DLW directives. The number of its members is 12, out of them six are nominated by management side while the remaining six belong to staff council. The functioning of the joint council is at the organizational level and for those matters referred from shop councils. As per the constitution of shop councils and joint council, the meetings held monthly and quarterly respectively.

The study shows that the shop council of the Transport Division held forty-two meetings between 1997-98 to 2001-02. It made 157 recommendations or otherwise decisions were taken by it. Out of these decisions about 10% have been implemented so far. In 2001-02 fifteen recommendations were made by it out of which 14 i.e. 93.33% have been implemented.

The Engine Division's Shop Council held in all 28 meetings out of which 8 were held in 1999-2000 being the highest and three meetings in 1997-98 being the lowest. During the period of study, the highest 81.25 percent of the recommendations of the Council were implemented as against 50 percent implementation in 1998-99. As a whole 82.43 percent of the recommendations/decisions of the Engine Shop Council were implemented in aggregate during the five years period.
An analysis of the functioning of the Shop Council in Equipment Division shows that 19 meetings of Council held in all as against 60 meetings during the period under review. It met six times, the highest in 1999-2000 and two times in the last 2000-01. The council decided 56 issues in aggregate out of which 38(77.2%) have been implemented so far which clearly shows that the recommendations of the council are well accepted by the management. Though in the year 1998-99, one third of the decisions of the council were implemented but there was a question on its functioning. But within a short span it has consolidated its working and keep watch on the implementation side also.

The data analysed for the working of the Production Office Shop Council depicts that in all 35 meetings were held by the Council i.e. 8,11,7,6 and 3 from 1997-98 to 2001-2002 in respective years. During its meetings, the Council has reached on solution of 124 issues, out of which 85 had been implemented so far being 65 percent of the aggregate.

It could be drawn as inference from the working of the four shop councils that all are doing well. But they have to enhance their frequency of meetings and keep vigil on the implementation side equally.

The Joint Council is an Apex body in the organization. The Chairman of the Council is from management side while the Vice-Chairman is from Staff Council side. The analysis of the functioning of the Joint Council shows that it hold nine meetings in all in the period of five years against twenty usual meetings. The highest number of matters
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(21) were decided by the Joint Council in 1999-2000 followed by 20 in 2000-01 and 19 in 1997-98. Four issues were settled in 1998-99.

So far as the implementation of recommendations of the Joint Council are concerned, 16 were implemented in 1999-2000. The analysis throughout the period of study shows a favourable functioning of the Joint Council. Yet to maintain the reputation, it is desirable that even greater implementation of the decisions of the Joint Council are needed in the unit under study.

Again, the industrial relations scenario by way of the analysis of the shop councils and joint council in terms of production, absenteeism, accident, welfare, grievance, etc. seems to be satisfactory but above all there is a need of trust and faith between management and staff council members for a congenial atmosphere, it is felt.

c). Committee Participation

Committee decision, one of the oldest practice in the management is another participative style in the unit under study. At present in all there are nine committees working for welfare/amenities/sports, etc. functioning in the DLW complex as follows:

- Area Committee
- Housing Committee
- Safety Committee
- Theft Committee
- Hospital Visiting Committee
- School Advisory Committee
- Sports Committee
- Cinema Club Committees
- Staff Benefit Committee

To develop a sense of citizenship and idea of community living among the residents of the DLW complex and for looking after sanitation, cleanliness and orderliness of the entire township has been divided into three areas, viz. East Township, West Township and Central Township, each are being under the charge of an Area Committee which is headed by a warden. The Chief Engineer of the unit under study is the Chief Warden of all the three area committees and maintains coordination among them. In every area committee the Staff Council nominate its members.

The study has revealed that working of the area committees taken together reached to a solution of above 100 grievances in all the years under study. The area committees disposed off 257, 274, 157, 117 and 282 grievances from 1997-98 to 2001-02. An analysis of available data clearly shows that the performance of the area committees during first two years was satisfactory which has deteriorated to a greater extent in the last two years of the study as 138 and 114 issues remained unresolved.

There is one Housing Committee mainly entrusted with allotment and change or exchange of quarters in the campus. As per the constitution of the committee there are 11 members including the Chairman, out of whom six come from Staff Council. The working of the housing
committee reveals that during the year 1998-99 highest number of allotment and transfer applications (161) were received but 62 grievances were disposed off while in the last year of the study the committee disposed off as many as 86 grievances. We find that about 200 grievances are pending for committee redressel.

One Safety Committee has been functioning since 1961 for entire workshop but at present three safety committees are working for engine, vehicle and service shops. In all the three safety committees, Staff Council is represented as per the constitution of the committees. The committees are basically concerned with safety measure and accident prevention, it meets quarterly. The Safety Committee disposed off 56, 44, 29, 31 and 59 grievances during the period of five years. Thus, it could be said that the safety committees are functioning well and are shouldering responsibility affectively.

To safeguard the properties and materials of the DLW a Theft Prevention Committee has been functioning to take corrective action according to the true situation so as to protect the permanent and temporary assets. There are six members of the Committee headed by Security Commandant as Chairman. The Committee held 13 meetings throughout the period of study. Despite all efforts taken by the Committee there have been matters of theft and burgulary. In 19 matters the committee initiated action and took serious action. In majority of the cases no action has been initiated by the Theft Committee. Loss pilferage and leakage of railway properties also appeared in the meetings.
The Hospital Visiting Committee maintains close association and cooperation between representatives of Staff Council, Mahila Samity, Welfare Organizations and Management of the hospital to the railway population. It also functions as an advisory body with regard to the welfare of indoor patients. There are seven members in the Committee inclusive of Chairman and Secretary. The Committee disposed off 103 cases, the highest in 1998-99 and its functioning is said to be satisfactory during the period under study. The committee is an instrumental machinery in all the matters to the upkeep and improvement of medical services in the DLW Central Hospital.

School Advisory Committee discusses the problems and takes measures related to education facility of children of railway employees in the DLW complex. There are 17 members including the Chairman on the School Advisory Board. The parents/guardians raise their issue with the Committee. The redressal data of grievances by the Committee though not available but it was found that the Committee is a very successful machinery in the upkeep and maintenance of schools and college.

The sports Committee organize, promote and develop all sports and games. The governing body of the Association comprised of the GM as patron and other office bearers. The activities of the sports governing committee is highly broad based. The secretaries of the different games (numbering about 20) call their meeting and discuss the problems related to their game/sports. DLW players are in the team of Indian Railways in various disciplines.
The Cinema Club Committee decides the problems and take suitable measures related with recreational amenity in the complex area. The affairs of the club is managed by a managing committee consisting seven members. The Club discussed from 36 to 49 issues varying during the period under study.

The Staff Benefit Fund's Committee have the power to spent the fund as assistance and relief for sickness and so like incidences for the benefits of the staff. It is called the Diesel Locomotive Works Staff Benefit Fund. The Committee held 10, 12, 8 10 and 9 meetings respectively from 1997-98 to 2001-02. The fund's assistance have reached in about 56 per cent of the cases against applied for.

Therefore, almost all the Committee in the unit under study are running satisfactory for the benefit of the employees and their dependants. Still it is suggested to streamline the activities of the some of the committees like sports, housing and so on.

d). Welfare Facilities and Social Security

The modern welfare for working conditions, living conditions and other facilities have been the outcome of the movement for better and efficient industrial relations. In DLW welfare measures have assumed special significance. The existing total welfare amenities may conveniently be classified as financial and non-financial.

Financial amenities include bonus, monthly production bonus, reward scheme, provident fund, gratuity, travel passes and conveyance
allowances, etc. During 1997 Rs. 35.68 lakhs was given by way of bonus which has risen to Rs.65.46 lakhs in 2000. The monthly production bonus in related to performance index based on working cycle time. This production bonus system is prevailing in DLW.

Every employee of the DLW contributes 10 per cent of basic pay to Contributory Provident Fund in which equal contribution is made by Railways. Similarly under Gratuity system according Railway Gratuity Rules after retirement payments are made. DLW paid Rs. 193.84 lakhs in 1997 and Rs. 394.18 lakhs during 2000 as gratuity. Under relief, distress, scholarships etc. various employees and their dependants have been assisted.

Rail travel passes are given to all regular employees and their entitled dependants four times in a year. It is available for visiting home town and if they desire to visit any other place on via Indian Railways upto a distance of 3250 Kms. Conveyance allowances for moped, scooter and car/jeep is available @ Rs.300/-, Rs. 600/- and Rs.1200/- per month respectively. Among other financial facilities available to employees are under Workmen’s Compensation Insurance Scheme, Nehru Distinguished Workers Award, etc.

The non-financial welfare facilities are intramural and extramural. Among the intramural i.e. work site facilities 117 water coolers and 296 water taps in running condition have been placed inside plant. The safety posters, slogan and pictorial boards have been placed. Many safety award
like Rail Suraksha Puraskar and National Safety Awards has been bagged by DLW employees in 1997 and 1998 respectively.

Five service and first aid facilities are available. There are six departmental canteens and a central kitchen functioning in DLW Plant in which subsidised items are provided. Mobile coffee/tea trolley services are also in operation.

Among extramural welfare facilities beyond the factory complex are housing, medical recreation, education, etc. Till 31st March, 2002 there were 3,641 quarters with modern amenities allotted to the employees. Medical and health services constitute the major welfare facilities for the benefit of the employees and their families. The DLW hospital is a 105 bedded hospital. In addition there are health units in West Colony and inside the workshop. In the Central Hospital operations, family planning activities, immunization, physical examination, etc. are fully available.

There are two recreation centres in West and South colonies of the township of the unit under study where indoor and outdoor game facilities and reading rooms with library facilities are functioning. The DLW cinema club is another centre of recreation. The children of the employees are provided free education upto intermediate in the schools run by the DLW. A DLW music college is run by the DLW cultural association and a Mahila Degree College is running from 2000-01 by U.P. Government.
DLW Women's Organization have been actively involved in promoting social, welfare and cultural activities among the railwaymen and their families particularly the women and children. The organization is running Bal Niketan School, Sewing School and Painting School, Childrens Library, providing scholarships to the children getting higher studies.

The other welfare facilities in operation include handicraft centre, study centre, fruit preservation centre, vocational training centre and cooperative societies. There are eight fair price shops at present in the campus. Though a vast and multi spectrum facilities to the employees inside and outside and plant are available still the researcher found that maintenance of the existing services and the improvement in them is a greater challenge to industrial relation machinery in the unit under study.