



SYNOPSIS OF POINTS Discussed by IATO delegation **with RTDC on 29th August 2019 at Jaipur**

Meeting Agenda was planned with RTDC regarding Palace on Wheels, on behalf of Railway Committee of IATO, to represent Rail Tour operators concerns related to Palace on Wheels which needed to be addressed in order to achieve greater synergy of Travel Trade with RTDC & move forward for more greater success in the upcoming season.

Palace on Wheels			
S.NO.	SUBJECT	ISSUES RAISED BY IATO	RESPONSE BY RTDC
1	Marketing	IATO emphasized that since last 4-5 years negligible marketing efforts have been initiated by RTDC towards the promotion of Prestigious Product of Rail Tourism of India “Palace on Wheels”. Looking at the current scenario and in this competitive market, RTDC should take stronger initiatives to promote Palace on Wheels, which is mother of all luxury trains in India with promotional showcasing in key Travel marts & periodical participation in road shows, promotion through digital & social media and organize FAM trips on few departures for selected Tour Operators and Media who have the potential to take this product to newer heights.	<p>A) In Principle, The Managing Director of RTDC Jaipur agreed that it is imperative for them to attend major travel marts to promote Product of Rail Tourism of India. A proposal will be sent by MD of RTDC to Rajasthan’s Chief Minister Office routed via Principal Secretary with a further file noting on it from Rajasthan State Tourism Minister before obtaining necessary sanction approval & before streamlining guidelines & future pathway.</p> <p>B) RTDC agreed with the suggestion of IATO, of hiring a professional IT Company to look into:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Revamping their website b) Digital marketing c) Instant response of RTDC on Complaints



			loaded on Trip advisor for doing patch-up exercise.
2	Material Support	There has been negligible material support from RTDC during promotion of Palace on Wheels to Rail Tour Operators in terms of High-resolution images, Train Video, Printed Brochure and Digital brochure. RTDC agreed to initiate immediate steps in updating the marketing material of Palace on Wheels. RTDC should provide updated promotional material such as Printed Brochures, Digital Brochures, High Res Images and Updated Video of Palace on Wheels with latest Testimonials of last year to the trade including Rail Tour Operators so that in turn promotion of Palace on Wheels product can be done with greater zest & zeal to their clientele & respective markets.	RTDC agreed to circulate their latest material like updated high resolution pics, videos etc. to not only their GSAs but also to IATO office in a link form so that IATO can circulate the same to its members.
3	Booking Policy	Presently promotional and incentive policy is creating barrier while promoting Palace on Wheels in this era of competitiveness. Looking at the competitiveness in the market place, there is desperate need to implement flexible booking & cancellation policy along with aggressive and flexible promotional and incentive policy required in promotion of Palace on Wheels notified to the Trade thru' its GSA's as well as to IATO in order to generate maximum business for achieving the target of higher occupancy level on each departure. The policy should be made motivational to incentivize the higher volume	<p>A) RTDC accepted that currently their inventory utilization is hovering around 50% only. RTDC agreed to work for re-structuring commission disposal to GSAs or High volume achievers by defining different slabs similar to the IRCTC policy for Maharaja Express Train. In order words, generating beyond the present target setup in policy for GSAs & consolidators, they will re-design growth oriented policy.</p> <p>B) RTDC also agreed to train their staff:-</p> <p>(i) For Para-medical training to handle physically handicapped clients.</p>



		achievers with over-riding benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) For finesse training of RTDC on-board staff in terms of communicative skills etc. (iii) Emergency cases for any seriously injured clients or sick clients who need medical exigency. (iv) RTDC on-board staff will add more items in their First Aid kit.
4	Refurbishment & Upgradation	<p>There have been endless complaints from clients in last 2 years about interiors of Palace on Wheels. Some of the travelers have compared the Palace on Wheels with other luxury trains of India and they felt that Palace on Wheels is not as superior when compared with other luxury trains. The clients are paying huge amount for the luxury travel on wheels in which they expect value of money product and services while Experiencing Travel by Palace on Wheels. It was suggested that RTDC should seriously look into this matter by going through the clients reviews of last 2 years where the complaints have been the most and ensure to refurbish the train accordingly in order to avoid any further complaints in the upcoming season. Also compensations should be offered by RTDC for justified & genuine customer complaints since. Previously in the past those complaints were never addressed & even responded by RTDC when reported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) RTDC informed that Rupees 75 Lakhs have been spent towards refurbishment and upgradation of Palace on Wheels train in the year 2019 and further once Rs. 7.06 Crores have been sanctioned for the year 2020, they will invest during 2020 summer renovation phase. B) Attached please find photos taken by Photographer hired by IATO delegation for the POW on 29 Aug'19 in Jaipur during joint inspection conducted by IATO & RTDC.
5	Finance and Account	From more that 1 year our Rail Tours Operators were facing major problem in account while there has been	RTDC advised that they have shortlisted 2-3 candidates and will employ the "Head of Accounts"



	Department Support	no accounts reconciliation done by RTDC. We have also been informed by our members that RTDC has not even submitted TDS component to the government and in some of cases the RTDC had submitted GST amount under wrong Category. RTDC should appoint dedicated accounts head in Delhi RTDC CRO office to address all queries related to payments, receipts, outstanding, TDS, GST and tax related issues on immediate basis so that the upcoming season will run smoothly and there will be no dispute in accounting at both the ends.	at RTDC Delhi within next 30 days. Their existing GM of RTDC Delhi is retiring & hence will be replaced by their new General Manager in RTDC Delhi who has been selected to take charge from 01 Oct 2019 onwards.
6	Child Policy in Super Deluxe Cabin	Child policy only exists currently in Deluxe cabins. IATO pro con stressed the importance to have same child policy for super Deluxe cabins also.	RTDC Agreed after long discussions & finally got convinced will initiate internal paperwork before announcing to maintain similar child policy as of Deluxe Cabins for their Super Deluxe Cabins also.
7	Insurance	Insurance policy has not be spelt out before & with limited exposure to the Travel Trade. Also there is No mention currently of the Insurance clause on back of POW tickets & should be done by RTDC, the way airlines do.	RTDC asserted that every Palace on Wheels Train passenger is covered for Insurance upto max. Rs. 11 Lakh (with joint contribution of Indian Railways & RTDC) and same will also now get printed on back side of Palace on Wheels Train ticket.
8	INR Tariff	IATO asserted that earlier the POW Tariff for Indian Nationals when computed was based on the formula of 1 USD = INR 60 & then freezed. With stiff completion all over & No SEIS benefit available to RTDC since their incoming payments mostly come in INR. In fact, barring luxury trains, most stakeholders & facets of a Tourism related package quoted quotations are submitted in INR, there is No rational why our legal tender of rupees cannot be pegged in	In Principal, MD of RTDC got convinced and verbally was in agreement after his note on the file would require discussions internally with principal secretary of Rajasthan Government and Tourism Minister before final decision is done by them in their re-pricing announcement. This process might take a few days but they will do utmost speedy action.



		INR for every global Traveler (National or Overseas)	
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