



Classification of stores

All materials are basically divided into two broad categories -

1. Stock
2. Non-Stock.

1. Stock items - Stock items are those items for which there is a regular demand, regular drawl or consumption and there is a regular recoupment.

2. Non-stock - Non-stock items are required occasionally and not on regular basis. These items are not frequently required or having one time requirement, no stocks are maintained. These items are purchased as and when required to meet specific demands.

The stock items are classified further as follows-

a) Ordinary Stores: These are generally such items of stores for which there is a regular turn over caused by a constant demand.

b) Emergency stores: The stores depots are also required to stock certain items of stores even though they do not have a regular turn over. These are emergency stores and comprise of items which do not ordinarily wear out or require renewal but which are required to be kept in stock to meet emergency due to breakage or unanticipated deterioration. These items are not readily available in the market and as such would require a long time for procurement in case they are not stocked.

c) Surplus Stores: Stores, which have not been issued to any user for past 24 months or more, are classified as Surplus Stores.

These are of two kinds-

i) **Moveable surplus** - Initially surplus items are classified as Moveable surplus, It means that these items are anticipated to issue in 24 months.

ii) **Dead surplus.** If no use is anticipated on any railway in coming 24 months the items are classified as Dead Surplus which are to be disposed off.

d) Special Stores: The items of stores required for works and other special purposes i.e. other than for 'operation' or 'ordinary maintenance and repairs' are called "Special Stores". Generally such items are dispatched directly to the users without being stocked in a stores depot.

e) Custody Stores: Stores which have been purchased for special works and charged to such works but left in the custody of stores department are called custody stores. These stores chiefly consist of

items obtained for the mechanical department for construction of rolling stock sanctioned under the capital or revenue programme. Directly the stores are received and paid for, the cost is at once debited to the works concerned. Instead of the stores lying in the workshops until they are required, the stores depot should keep them in safe custody, proper numerical records being maintained by it.

f) Inactive stores: Items which have no issues for last 12 months, and stocks exists are called inactive or non-moving items.

g) Imprest Stores: These items are required for day-to-day operation of services and maintenance of the activity. Imprest stores may be either charged off stores or may be kept in capital account head also. Certain important units like loco sheds, TXR depots etc. require a large number of items for day-to-day repeat use, maintenance and operation of rolling stock, etc. The limits up to which the stocks are to be kept are also specified while sanctioning such items and are generally fixed as 2 or 3 months requirement. Imprest stores is like a standing advance of materials to meet the day-to-day requirement of repairs, maintenance and operation of rolling stock etc.

Standard Nomenclature Lists

The details of all items having possible use on Indian Railways are contained in booklets known as nomenclature lists. These books contain complete and unambiguous description of items, their code numbers (Known as Price List Numbers or PL Nos.), Specification or Drawing No., the unit of transaction and the depots on various Railways where the item is stocked. These details are elaborated further as under:

Complete and unambiguous description:

The description of each item should be framed in such a way that it does not give rise to different interpretations. The objective behind is that the user should know what exactly he wants, the purchase officer should know what exactly is required to be purchased and the supplier in turn should know what is to be supplied. Otherwise the same item could be stocked at different places under different headings, e.g. washers being called as rings, washers, bushings, collects, grommets, spacers, etc.

Describing an item:

The basic commodity method has been adopted in describing an item. In this system the basic commodity precedes the detailed description of the item. For example " Ordinary toilet soap" would under the method be described as "Soap, Toilet, Ordinary". The basic commodity is soap. The word "toilet" specifies the kind of that commodity and "ordinary" further qualifies the toilet variety. If the basic commodity method is not used, the different kinds of soaps will find themselves listed in different places. In short the description should be arranged in the following order of precedence:

1. The mention of the basic commodity
2. The general variance in kind, use, size or shape
3. The particular kind or size.
4. The specification/drawing.

A few instance of how the items would have been described in these books are:

Items Description	Nomenclature Book
Brass plated spirit level	Level,Sprit,brass plated
Taper shank twist drill	Drill,twist,taper shank

End use of items: In some books the purpose for which the item is used is also incorporated in the nomenclature list. For instance there are numerous grades of lubricating oils stocked and used for various purposes. This information is briefly mentioned in the nomenclature not as a part of the description but say in remarks column - as this will greatly help the consumer.

Mention of makers name: The commercial brand or the proprietary make of the item will be avoided in the description. Rather than make or commercial brand, we need to mention specification and drawing reference for clarity.

Specification or drawing: Reference to a standard specification or in its absence the Railways drawing if any will be mentioned against each description. Specification and drawing references are not only useful to suppliers, including Railway manufacturing shops but also assist the Stores department in the purchase as well as inspection of supplies.

The unit: It is desirable that for each item all transactions should be in one and the same unit. This will avoid unnecessary references for clarifications and would also facilitate correct issues and receipts eliminating arithmetical errors in conversion from one unit to another. Some of the unit codes have been indicated as under: 01 = Number, 02 = Pair, 03 = Set, 13 = Kilogram, 14 = Quintal, 15 = Metric Tonne, 22 = Metre and so on.

Material Code (P.L. No.): In order to recognise every item distinctly, each item appearing in the nomenclature book has been allotted a code number, which is also known as **Price List number**. These numbers enable unique identification of stock items and as a result of extensive standardisation all over the Railways, easy exchange of information on each item among the Railway Zones and Production Units is possible. While allotting these numbers, an opportunity has also been taken to group the items in a meaningful manner, so that group wise analysis of materials is also facilitated. Each stock item will have a unique PL number.

All stock items are having PL numbers but all PL numbers are not necessarily stock items. Unified lists are common to all Railways and facilitate easy exchange of information between the Railways. Disposal of Surplus Stores and Centralised Purchase becomes easier. In addition to PL no., depot, Unit, Vendor, Consignee etc. are also codified.