



Filming on Indian Railways

Permission workflow, zonal contacts, fees and safety, the working checklist for film, TV and OTT productions on the Indian Railways network.

1. Permission Workflow at a Glance

Filming on railway premises is governed by the Railway Board's Guidelines for Grant of Permission for Film Shooting, run through the Public Relations Directorate. Since November 2021 the Film Facilitation Office (FFO) single-window portal at ffo.gov.in has consolidated the application route for feature films, TV and web series; documentaries, music videos and commercials still apply offline to the Zonal Railway CPRO, or for foreign nationals to the Executive Director (Information & Publicity), Rail Bhawan, New Delhi.

Production type	Where it starts	Then
Indian feature / TV / web	FFO portal (ffo.gov.in)	Routed to the relevant Zonal Railway CPRO for approval
Foreign feature film	MIB clearance (New Delhi)	Railway Board processes, then zonal sign-off
Foreign documentary	MEA External Publicity Division	Railway Board processes, then zonal sign-off
Documentary / music video / ad	Offline to Zonal CPRO / Rail Bhawan	Direct zonal approval

Lead time: portal approvals typically run 20-30 working days; plan a two-month horizon to absorb the security review and insurance procurement. The slowest approval, not the fastest, sets the start date.

2. Zonal Railway CPRO Directory

Indian Railways operates 17 Zonal Railways, each with its own Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO). Verified contacts below; the full, current directory for all zones is maintained at core.indianrail.gov.in and through the FFO portal. Confirm the email before filing, as zonal addresses change.

Zone	HQ	Key filming locations	CPRO contact
Northern	New Delhi	Delhi Jn, North India routes	cpronr@nr.railnet.gov.in
Western	Mumbai (Churchgate)	Mumbai CSMT area, Western corridor	cprowr@wr.railnet.gov.in
Central	Mumbai (CSMT)	Victoria Terminus area, Pune	cprocr@cr.railnet.gov.in
Eastern	Kolkata	Howrah, Darjeeling Himalayan Railway	cproer@er.railnet.gov.in
Southern	Chennai	Chennai Central, Nilgiri Mountain Railway	cprouthernrailway@gmail.com
South Western	Hubballi	Bengaluru, Mysuru, Karnataka routes	cprousouthwesternrailway@gmail.com
South Central	Secunderabad	Telangana / Andhra routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
East Coast	Bhubaneswar	Odisha coast routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
East Central	Hajipur	Bihar / Jharkhand routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
North Central	Prayagraj	Agra, Kanpur routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
North Eastern	Gorakhpur	UP east routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
Northeast Frontier	Guwahati (Maligaon)	Northeast routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
North Western	Jaipur	Rajasthan routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
South Eastern	Kolkata	Bengal / Odisha routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
South East Central	Bilaspur	Chhattisgarh routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in



Zone	HQ	Key filming locations	CPRO contact
West Central	Jabalpur	MP routes	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in
Konkan Railway	Navi Mumbai	Konkan coast, Western Ghats viaducts	via FFO / core.indianrail.gov.in

Foreign productions & documentary applications: **Railway Board, Executive Director (Information & Publicity)**, edip@rb.railnet.gov.in, Ph 011-23385072.

3. Pre-Production Permit Checklist

Assemble the full package before submission. A missing document resets the clock.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Shooting script covering all railway sequences (named stations, routes, facilities, not general regions)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Day-wise shooting schedule mapped to each zone
<input type="checkbox"/>	Comprehensive insurance covering railway assets and crew (railway procures the policy; you deposit the premium)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Signed indemnity bond with an arbitration clause
<input type="checkbox"/>	MIB clearance letter (foreign feature films) or MEA clearance (foreign documentaries)
<input type="checkbox"/>	FFO portal application submitted (features/TV/web) or offline application to Zonal CPRO
<input type="checkbox"/>	Security deposit lodged (set case-by-case by the Zonal GM and Financial Advisor; refundable after wrap)
<input type="checkbox"/>	RPF supervision arranged and fee accounted for
<input type="checkbox"/>	Liaison officer confirmed (Railway Publicity; plus Commercial and Security officers for feature shoots)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Separate DGCA / Digital Sky drone permission filed, if aerial work is planned
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traction power block requested with the zonal electrical department, if rigs work near live OHE

4. Fees & Special-Train Cost Worksheet

Item	Basis	Indicative cost
Station / premises, A-1 & A	Mumbai CSMT, Delhi Jn, Chennai Central	Rs 1,00,000 per day
Station / premises, B-1 & B-2	Mysuru, Pune and similar	Rs 50,000 per day
Station / premises, other	All other stations	Rs 25,000 per day
Rolling stock	Moving or stabled train	Rs 30,000 per day
Special train (hire)	CC-44/2015 & CC-44A/2015 line items	Rs 5-15 lakh total
Security deposit	Set by zonal GM & FA, refundable	Case-by-case
RPF supervision	Force team assigned to the shoot	Per zonal scale

Special-train line items (CC-44/2015): haulage, detention, pantry and generator, light engine, empty haulage, service charge, licence fee, insurance and applicable taxes. A typical special train is one engine, four compartments and one SLR. **Exemptions:** Films Division, Doordarshan and government film institutes are exempt from standard fees when not using exclusive rolling stock. Full refund only if cancelled before arrangements are made.

Incentive offset: railway shoots qualify for the FFO International Shooting Incentive, up to 40% of Qualifying Production Expenditure in India (30% base, +5% for 15% Indian crew, +5% for Significant Indian Content), capped at Rs 30 crore. Features need a Rs 3 crore minimum QPE; documentaries are exempt from the threshold. Structure the claim from pre-production to realise it.

5. Safety & OHE Power-Block Checklist

The RPF team on set has authority to halt filming. Core restrictions are non-negotiable.

<input type="checkbox"/>	No filming from footboards or train rooftops, without exception
<input type="checkbox"/>	No shooting on active tracks during train movements
<input type="checkbox"/>	High-traffic stations (Howrah, Mumbai CSMT, Chennai Central) scheduled off-peak, midnight to 5AM window preferred



<input type="checkbox"/>	Station names, train identities and route signage not altered or masked without Railway Board approval
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drone work cleared separately under DGCA Drone Rules 2021 and Digital Sky, alongside the railway permission
<input type="checkbox"/>	25kV overhead equipment (OHE): statutory clearance kept for all cranes, jibs, masts and ladders near live wires
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traction power block (de-energising the OHE) requested in advance via the zonal electrical department
<input type="checkbox"/>	No metallic equipment or water near live OHE until the power block is confirmed

6. Heritage Mountain Railways

The UNESCO heritage lines are marquee assets with their own logistics: the **Nilgiri Mountain Railway** (about 280km from Bengaluru, a multi-day base-camp operation, used in Dil Se), the **Darjeeling Himalayan Railway** (high-altitude conditions needing advance camera preparation, used in Barfi!), and the **Kalka-Shimla Railway**. Build a longer planning horizon than a standard urban station shoot.