



Western Australia

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT 1904

**Government Railways By-laws — By-law 79  
(Persons entering the Service)**

These by-laws were repealed by the *Government Railways  
Amendment and Repeal By-laws 2003* bl. 3 as at 12 Dec 2003 (see  
*Gazette* 12 Dec 2003 p. 5042).



## **Government Railways By-laws — By-law 79 (Persons entering the Service)**

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GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT 1904

**Government Railways By-laws — By-law 79  
(Persons entering the Service)**

THE Commissioner of Railways of Western Australia, in pursuance of the powers conferred upon him by “The *Government Railways Act 1904*,” amended, does hereby make the following By-law, to come into operation on the 1st day of August, 1925, and all previous By-laws and Rules and Regulations conflicting therewith are hereby repealed.

**1. Standards of vision, colour-sense and hearing for employees**

The standard of vision, colour-sense, and hearing for persons entering the service and those in the service shall be as follows: —

*Persons entering the Service*

Class	Nature of Employment	Vision	Colour-sense	Hearing
1	Cleaners and Firemen	6/6 each eye. Hypermetropia of more than 1D to reject	Safe . . . .	Normal. Ordinary conversational voice at 20 feet
2	Lad Porters, Porters, Shunters, and Junior Clerks for Traffic Branch (Road Motor Bus and Motor Lorry Drivers,)	6/6 each eye. Hypermetropia of more than 1.5D to reject	do. . . . .	do. do.
3	Lads and Junior Clerks (other	Not less than 6/9 each eye. Not tested for Hypermetropia	do . . . . .	do do

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Class	Nature of Employment	Vision	Colour-sense	Hearing
3A	than for Transportation Branch) and Apprentices for Electrical trades  Apprentices, other than for Electrical trades	Not less than 6/9 each eye. Not tested for Hypermetropia	Not tested	do  do
4	Repairers (otherwise Fettlers or Packers), Gangers, adult Labourers, and others working on or connected with the safety of lines, including tradesmen whose duties may involve risk to themselves or others	Not less than 6/9 with both eyes open; neither eye to be less than 6/12. Not tested for Hypermetropia	Safe . . . .	Three-fourths of normal
4A	Artisans and others in Shops Pumpers (whose duties involve travelling by tricycle on running lines) and Train Examiners	Not less than 6/9 with both eyes open; neither eye to be less than 6/12 with or without glasses	Not tested	Sufficient for duties to be performed.
5A	Road Motor Bus and Lorry Drivers	Not less than 6/12 with both eyes open, neither eye to be less than 6/18	Safe . . . .	Half normal each ear, or three-quarter normal with one ear only

No condition which may further impair the vision or hearing shall exist in any case.

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*Employees in the Service*

Class	Employee	Vision	Colour-sense	Hearing
5	Locomotive Engine-drivers, Motormen, Firemen and Cleaners, Signalmen	<p>Not less than 6/9 with both eyes open; neither eye to be less than 6/24</p> <p>Where the vision of Locomotive Engine-drivers and Firemen is less than 6/9, but not less than 6/12, with both eyes open, neither eye being less than 6/24, employees will not be disqualified if they can pass a practical test with fixed signals; such men to be re-examined every year or oftener if necessary.</p> <p>Where a Signalman is below the standard, glasses may be worn provided the vision is corrected to not less than 6/6, both eyes open, neither eye less than 6/9.</p> <p>In the event of an employee with over 15 years' service failing to pass the "Van" test, he will be given an opportunity of passing a practical test under field conditions over distances 200, 300, and 500 yards with each eye separately. If examinee passes this test satisfactorily, he will be allowed to continue his duties; such employee to be examined at intervals as considered necessary.</p>	Safe . . . .	Half normal each ear; or three-fourths normal with one ear only.

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Class	Employee	Vision	Colour-sense	Hearing
6	Guards, Porters, and Shunters, Station-masters and other officers in charge of stations who have to take part in shunting duties	Not less than 6/12 with both eyes open, neither eye to be less than 6/36. Where the vision is less than 6/12 but not less than 6/18 with both eyes open, neither eye being less than 6/36, employees will not be disqualified if they can pass a practical test with fixed signals; such men to be re-examined every year or oftener if necessary.  In the event of an employee with over 15 years' service, failing to pass the "Van" test, he will be given an opportunity of passing a practical test under field conditions over distances of 200, 300, and 500 yards with each eye separately. If examinee passes this test satisfactorily, he will be allowed to continue his duties; such employee to be examined at intervals as considered necessary.	do . . . . .	do do
6A	Station-masters and other officers in charge of stations, who do not take part in shunting duties, Traffic and Locomotive Running Inspectors	Not less than 6/12 with both eyes open, neither eye to be less than 6/36  Where the vision is below this standard, glasses may be worn, provided the vision is	do . . . . .	do do



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Class	Employee	Vision	Colour-sense	Hearing
7	<p>Repairers (otherwise Fettlers or Packers), Gangers, adult Labourers, Fog Signalmen, and others working on or connected with the safety of lines, including tradesmen whose duties involve risk to themselves or others. Pumpers (whose duties involve travelling by tricycle on running lines) and Train Examiners</p>	<p>corrected to 6/6, both eyes open, neither eye to be less than 6/9.</p> <p>Men with one eye only, or with one seriously defective eye, may be retained in approved positions if vision with one eye is not less than 6/9, with or without glasses.</p> <p>Not less than 6/18 with both eyes open . . . . .</p> <p>In the event of an employee with over 15 years' service, failing to pass the "Van" test, he will be given an opportunity of passing a practical test under field conditions over distances of 200, 300, and 500 yards with each eye separately. If examinee passes this test satisfactorily, he will be allowed to continue his duties; such employee to be examined at intervals as considered necessary.</p>	do . . . . .	<p>Half normal with both ears together. Men with one eye, or with one seriously defective eye, to have three-fourths or normal hearing with both ears together.</p>
8	<p>Employee in positions not involving risk to themselves or others. Pumpers (other than those whose duties involve travelling by tricycle on</p>	<p>Sufficient for the duties to be performed . . . . .</p>	Not tested	<p>Sufficient for the duties to be performed</p>

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Class	Employee	Vision	Colour-sense	Hearing
	running lines)			

No active disease in the eyes or ears shall exist in any case.

**2. Examination by medical officer**

The tests for persons entering the service will be made by a Medical Officer. When making medical examination for admission to the service the fee for the Doctor's examination to be paid by the candidate for employment.

**3. Re-examination**

The re-examinations shall be conducted by a Departmental Examiner or Examiners.

**4. Examiners to be approved by Commissioner**

Each Examiner to be appointed to conduct the vision, colour-sense, and hearing tests shall first be approved by the Commissioner.

**5. Examiners to be examines**

Before being appointed as an Examiner he shall be examined by a Railway Medical Officer in vision, colour-sense, and hearing, and he shall be further examined at least once in every year thereafter.

**6. Examiner to be conversant with examination methods**

He shall also satisfy the Railway Medical Officer that he is conversant with the prescribed methods for the examination in vision, colour-sense, and hearing.

**7. Periods of examination**

Periods of examination of employees in the Service — All employees specified in Classes 5 to 7, inclusive, shall be re-examined: —

- (a) Every four years, except locomotive engine-drivers, acting drivers, motormen, and signalmen, whose re-examination must be conducted every two years.  
(When, however a locomotive engine-driver or fireman or motorman has passed a signal which is said to have been set in the danger position, but which he alleges was not at danger, he must be sent to the Medical Officer for examination as soon as possible after such occurrence.)
- (b) On transfer from a Branch, for which a lower standard of vision and hearing is prescribed, for entrance to the service to a branch with a higher entrance standard, the officer or employee must pass the standard fixed for entrance into the service for the particular Branch to which he is transferred.
- (c) On promotion to the position of locomotive engine-driver, or to the position of signalman (signalmen on appointment to conform to the standard 6/12, 6/12, 6/9, without glasses).
- (d) Immediately after any railway accident in which an officer or employee is concerned, or after any personal injury or sickness, which may be likely to impair the vision or hearing.
- (e) If there is reason to suppose that the vision, colour-sense, or hearing of an employee has deteriorated, subsequent to the date of his last examination, he must be sent for re-examination irrespective of the date on which he was last examined.

**8. Failure to pass examination**

Failure to pass examinations — In the event of an officer or employee failing to pass the examination conducted by the

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Departmental Examiner, and not being satisfied, he may appeal to the Head of the Branch, who may thereupon arrange for a test by the Railway Medical Officer or Departmental Ophthalmic Surgeon, whose report shall be submitted to the Commissioner, whose decision shall be final. The cost of such examination will be borne by the Department.

**9. Practical tests**

Practical tests —

- (a) When an employee once passes a practical test he need not be subjected to a further one so long as his vision as certified by the officer at each annual examination, remains not worse than it was when he passed such practical test.
- (b) Employees whose colour-sense is found to be defective are not to be subjected to the practical test.
- (c) The distance for the practical test to be fixed for the running staff at 700 yards, and for others, 600 yards: Provided that in the event of an employee with over 15 years' service, failing to pass the "Van" test, he will be given an opportunity of passing a practical test under field conditions over distances of 200, 300, and 500 yards with each eye separately.

**10. Glasses**

Glasses —

- (a) The use of glasses to assist in passing the vision test shall be permitted in respect of Classes 4a and 6a.
- (b) Every signalman for whom glasses are necessary to enable him to pass the test, shall be required to provide himself with two pairs of glasses, one pair to be kept in the signal box as part of his equipment, and shall produce both pairs for inspection at his periodical examination.

Men who require glasses for reading purposes, as well as for distance, may be required to use “bi-focal” lenses, if considered advisable by the examiner.

- (c) All glasses must be tested and approved by an optician before being used on duty, or at the earliest possible opportunity.

**11. Equipment for examination**

Equipment for examination. — The examinations will be conducted as follows: —

For vision . . . . .	By Snellen’s test types
For colour-sense . . . . .	By Edridge Green or modified Williams’ lantern, one-eighth or one-quarter inch opening, and by Stilling’s plates.
For hearing . . . . .	By voice, watch, and tuning fork.

**12. Examination methods**

The following instructions must be observed by Departmental Examiners in the conduct of examinations: —

- (a) Vision Test — Place the person to be examined so that he will not face a strong light. In cases where separate test of each eye has to be made, see that one eye is completely covered by holding a card or piece of blottingpaper over it, placing the card or blotting-paper firmly against the nose, but taking care not to press the covered eye. Hold one of the test letter cards at a distance of 20 feet in a good clear light, but not in direct sunlight. Ask him to read the smallest letters on card. If he can read correctly or with a mistake of not more than one letter, place before him another card. If the 20 feet type is correctly read his vision can be recorded as 6/6 or normal. If he cannot read the letters at 20 feet, ask him to read those which he should in the ordinary course be able to read at 30 feet; if he cannot accomplish this, ask

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him to read those which he should in the ordinary course be about to read at 40 feet, and so on to the 120 feet.

If the letters which he should in the ordinary course read at 30 feet are the smallest he can read at 20 feet, then his vision must be recorded as 6/9; if the 40 feet letters are the smallest he can read at 20 feet, then his vision must be recorded as 6/12; if 60 feet, then it would be 6/18; if 80 feet, 6/24; if 120, 6/36. The fraction in each case represents the amount of acuteness of vision as compared with that of the average normal eye. The test is then to be repeated with the other eye (the first being covered in its turn).

For the test with both eyes the same conditions are to be observed.

Except where specifically provided for, the test must be made without glasses. If glasses are worn by the person examined, the effect of a test without glasses must also be noted.

- (b) Dr. Williams' Lantern Test. — The room being darkened, light both burners of the lamp, and place the lantern 20 feet from the person to be examined, on a level with his head.

The lantern contains two series of coloured discs, *viz.*, large five-eighths inch diameter, and medium, quarter-inch.

The sliding diaphragm should be first arranged so that two lights are shown through the quarter inch disc, and the one examined must call distinctly the names of the colours as shown e.g., left, green; right, red; etc., the Examiner to note on the form as the examination proceeds, under the number of each colour shown, the name given to the colour — R (red); G (green); Y-(yellow); P (purple); and so on.

After testing with the two lights, the Examiner to so adjust the sliding diaphragm that only one light is shown

at a time, and the one examined will again call as each colour is shown — the colours called also to be noted by the Examiner as provided in the foregoing.

- (c) **Hearing Test** — Place the person to be examined at a distance of 20 feet with one ear towards the Examiner; have him stop the ear furthest from the Examiner by placing the finger over it, then let him repeat aloud the words or numbers spoken by the Examiner in an ordinary conversational tone, and note the distance in feet at which they can be repeated correctly. Have him turn the other ear towards the Examiner, and repeat the test, also with one ear closed as before.

If the one examined can only hear at 15 feet what he should hear at 20 feet, his hearing would be regarded as three-fourths normal; if he can only hear at 10 feet what he should hear at 20 feet, his hearing would be regarded as half normal, and his hearing would be recorded accordingly.

The results must be carefully noted on forms provided for the purpose, which will form the permanent records of the Department.

**13. Consideration to be given to employees**

The examinations must not be hurried, and every consideration must be extended to the officers and employees, particularly those who may show signs of nervousness.

**14. Employees may rest before examination**

Members of the running staff, just in from a long run, or others fatigued after a heavy day's work, must, if they so desire, be given the opportunity of coming up for further examination after having had the usual period of rest.

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**15. Examination to be private**

Each person must be examined separately; there must be no interruption during the examination, and except as otherwise provided, there must be no other person present whilst the examination is being conducted.

**16. Results**

Advice of results of tests must be forwarded by the Examiner to the Heads of Branches concerned, and to the Chief Accountant for record purposes.

**17. Head of Branch responsible for compliance**

The duty of seeing that employees are examined in accordance with this By-law will devolve upon the Head of the Branch concerned.

*[By-law 79 inserted by Gazette 25 September 1925 pp.1812-4;  
amended by Gazette 27 May 1927 p.1389.]*



### **Notes**

- <sup>1.</sup> This is a compilation of *Government Railways By-laws — By-law 79* and includes the amendments referred to in the following Table.

### **Compilation table**

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<b>Citation</b>	<b>Gazettal</b>	<b>Commencement</b>
<i>Government Railways By-laws — By-law 79</i>	25 Sep 1925 p. 1812-4 27 May 1927 p.1389	

**These by-laws were repealed by the *Government Railways Amendment and Repeal By-laws 2003* bl. 3 as at 12 Dec 2003 (see *Gazette* 12 Dec 2003 p. 5042)**

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