

# From the History of the Gendarme Police Service Organization on the Trans-Baikal Railway (1899–1917)

Ivanov A. A.

Department of political science, history  
and regional studies,  
Irkutsk state university,  
Irkutsk, Russian Federation  
ottisk@irmail.ru

Kuras L. V.

History and Culture of Central Asia,  
Institute of Mongolian, Buddhist and Tibetan Studies,  
Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences  
Ulan-Ude, Russian Federation,  
kuraslv@yandex.ru

Kuras S. L.

Department of Customs affairs and jurisprudence,  
Irkutsk state transport university  
Irkutsk, Russian Federation  
kuras@list.ru

Kuras T. L.

Department of Justice, Legal Institute  
Irkutsk state university  
Irkutsk, Russian Federation  
tanya\_kuras@mail.ru

**Abstract**—The article is devoted to the history of the gendarme police department of the Trans-Baikal Railway of the early XX century. Based on significant archival material entered into scientific circulation, for the first time, the authors determine the total number of employees, the structure and activity, the system of retraining of officials of this department. The conclusion is made about the high level of organization of this service in the matter of law enforcement, property security, and uninterrupted work on the road.

**Keywords**—police, gendarmes, structure, staffing, Trans-Baikal Railway.

## I INTRODUCTION

The activity of the political police of the Russian Empire is still not studied deeply enough. From the literature available on this topic, we will name only a few numbers of specialists who have made a major contribution to the development of the topic. This, above all [1-11]. The political police of the Russian Empire were one of the main instruments of the state's struggle against the radical opposition movement, an essential part of the law enforcement system. Solving the difficult tasks of political investigation, making inquiries on political crimes, monitoring the activities of revolutionary parties, gendarmes also had a very complex organizational structure, in which the gendarme police departments of the railway had a special place. The Railway Gendarme Service has its separate history. In 1846, a temporary gendarme squadron was established for police supervision on the St. Petersburg-Moscow railway from the gendarmes' corps, which were the basis for the country's first gendarme regional railway

department creation the following year. The further development of the railway network in the European part of Russia led to the widespread of the relevant police organizations, which primarily had the function of monitoring

the general order and "deanery", as well as ensuring the safety of railway property of any form of ownership, preventing criminal offenses on stations and in the railway right of way. Gendarmes also carried out certain social tasks: they monitored the fulfillment by construction contractors of their obligations to the workers, sought to prevent outbreaks of natural discontent and strikes by railroad workers.

From 1866, these police departments were known as the Gendarme-Police Departments of the Railway (the GPDR). Initially, the administrations were subordinate to the Minister of Transport and Communications, and from 1867, they were reassigned to the gendarmes' corps. The rights and duties of the directorates were constantly expanding, by 1895, their number had increased to 21, and each serviced a section of the road with a length of about 2000 versts. The turning point in the history of these services was in 1905. The active participation of railway workers in revolutionary events forced the government to involve the GPDR in the fight against the leftist radical movement. By the decree at the Separate Corps of Gendarmes dated 28 July 1906, the duties of the officials of the departments were charged with carrying out inquiries about all "criminal actions" of a political nature, "committed in the railway right of way". Thus, from 1906, the railway gendarmes began to serve as both the general police and the political police.

## II METHODS AND MATERIALS

In carrying out the study, the following methods were used: the method of historical analysis which facilitated the study of the process of the formation of gendarme police departments of the railway made it possible to trace the transformation of functions and tasks determined by the state. The narrative method helped to study the structure, strength, payment system, disciplinary actions and incentive measures to the gendarmes. The comparative method made it possible to clarify

formally defined and real relationships between various law enforcement agencies on the ground with the higher authorities.

The main information sources for this article were the materials from two regional archives - the State Archive of the Republic of Buryatia and the State Archive of the Irkutsk Region. The confidential nature of the gendarmeswork imprinted on the documentary basis of the historical research: archival materials provide an insight into some of the principles and mechanisms of the functioning of the political police: working with agents, informers, provocation among workers and intellectuals, financing large-scale operations - documents about these and many other aspects of their activity are not deposited in the archives. The complete absence of any specific information about the gendarmes in the regional recurrent publications of that period can be considered as the key feature of these sources.

### III DISCUSSION

In Siberia, the GPDR appeared on the eve of the XX century. As is known, large-scale railway development of the territories beyond the Ural stone unfolded only with the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, in 1891. The construction works were carried out in the following sections: Ussuriyskaya Railway (1891–1897), West Siberian (1892–1896), Trans-Baikal (1895–1900), Chinese-Eastern (1897–1907), Circum-Baikal (1899–1904), Amurskaya (1908–1916). The pace of construction was impressive - each year they laid 500–600 km of track. In the process of commissioning sections of the highway, gendarme police departments (GPDs) were opened. By the beginning of the XX century. In Siberia and Manchuria, there were already five, and by 1916, there were six GPDs in which more than 50 officers and 1,712 non-commissioned officers served (excluding Zabayskaya).

The first gendarmes in Irkutsk appeared as early as 1833. It was a provincial gendarme group of 31 people with staff officers from the VIII Siberian gendarme district. The gendarme police supervision on the railway was organized with the arrival of the first train in Irkutsk. Already on January 27, 1899, the Omsk gendarme police department was formed on the construction of the Trans-Baikal Railway. Its staff carried the patrol service, monitored the maintenance of law and order at stations and in trains, suppressed thefts and hooliganism. The gendarmes in all respects replaced the general police on the road, the latter could act here only by invitation in cases of conducting joint investigative actions.

The structure of the Gendarme-Police Departments of the Trans-Baikal Railway (the GPDTBR) corresponded to the organization of the services of the road itself, which was quite legitimate. The gendarmes had a Department headed by a commander; at all the large stations there were offices divided into smaller sections and posts. In the years 1905–1906 the gendarmerie police department had six divisions: Irkutsk, in whose area of responsibility there were stations: Mikhalevo, Baikal, Khvoynaya, Maritui, Sharazhlgai Baikal - Kultuk, Utulik, Murino, Vydrino, Tankhoi, Variable, Cape, Embassy; Verkhneudinskoe - Selenga, Tataurovo, Onokhoi, Zaigraevo, Ilka; Petrovsk-Zavodskoye - Gorkhon, Tarbagatay, Talbaga, Laughing, Baba, Khilok, Hushinga, Taydut; Chita branch - Mozhon, Sokhondo, Yablonovaya, Ingoda, Chita-station,

Kruchina, Makkoeyo; Manchurian - Andrianovka, Buryat, Aga, Olovyanaya, Byrka, Hadabulak, Borzya, Kharanur, Sharasun; and Sretenskoye with Karymskaya, Chinese Urulga train station. [12].

What was the number of employees subordinated to the gendarmerie police department of the Trans-Baikal Railway? There is no single answer to this question. The number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and lower ranks can be established only by indirect data. So, from the "List of annual things for lower ranks of management for 1905," it follows that there were those at that time: in the Irkutsk, Baikal, Verkhneudinsky, Petrovsko-Zabaikalsky, Chitinsky, Sretensky and Manchurian offices there were 9, 5, 7, 4, 8, 5, 10 people respectively. Besides, the uniform was supposed to be given to management clerks - two units, "newly enrolled non-commissioned officers and dismissed from service" in the amount of 27 pieces, as well as "non-commissioned officer Vymorov", in total of 76 employees.

The "Uniform Clothing List for August 1, 1906" provides other information: Irkutsk office - Cavalry Sergeant, non-commissioned officers 33; Baikal office: Acting Cavalry Sergeant, non-commissioned officers 24; Verkhneudinskoye: Cavalry Sergeant, non-commissioned officers 19; Petrovsky-Zabaikalsky office: Acting Cavalry Sergeant, non-commissioned officers 17; Chita: non-commissioned officers 30; Sretensk office: non-commissioned officers 21; Manchurian office: Cavalry Sergeant, non-commissioned officers 30, a total of 179 people.

The order of the head of the Gendarme-Police Department of the Trans-Baikal Railway dated July 4, 1906, is the third source of information, in which certain "reference books of the Highest Decree dated December 14, 1905" received from the headquarters of the Separate gendarme corps the following calculations: Irkutsk - 34, Baikal - 26, Verkhneudinskoe - 25, Petrovskoye - 21, Chita - 36, Sretenskoye - 24 and Manchurian - 34, a total of 200 pieces. Assuming that the first source still suffers from incompleteness, it is reasonable to presume that the total number of gendarmes on the Trans-Baikal Railway was no more than two hundred people. At the same time, the largest offices were the Chita, Manchurian, and Irkutsk.

What are the sources of gendarme personnel replenishment on the Trans-Baikal Railway? It can be said with confidence that for the most part (as, indeed, in the whole country) they are army lower ranks that were discharged: those who wanted to enter the gendarme service, submitted a corresponding report to their superiors, and after successfully passing the required inspection, they were accepted into the staff of gendarmes and appointed to the existing vacant position in a particular office. At the same time, the type of troops from which the recruits came, was not significant for the Department. To prove this statement, we quote the following order of the GPDTBR dated June 1, 1906: "Army members in the emergency service platoon fireworker 6 batteries of the 10th artillery brigade Gregory Chudin, sergeant officer 20 East-Siberian rifle regiment Andrei Losev, senior non-commissioned officer of the Life Guards The 4th Infantry Imperial surname of the battalion Nefed Alyabyev, junior fireworker of the 31st artillery brigade Semyon Blokh and senior non-commissioned officer of the

123th Kozlovsky infantry regiment Alexey Gordeyenko are defined according to their desires for a five-year long term service in the direction entrusted to me for non-commissioned officers. The mentioned non-commissioned officers should be transferred to the lists of the Department and the allowance set out from the treasury should be paid from this date”.

For the “irreproachable” overtime service, the railway gendarme could be awarded the insignia in the form of a special patch on the uniform - “golden narrow chevron”. At the same time, the five-year service could be extended further as he wished, if there was a petition from the immediate head of the department. At the end of the service provided by the subscription, as well as upon reaching a certain age, the gendarme fired into the warriors of the state militia.

The GPDTBRalwayshadbeenaimedto maintain strict discipline and strict observance of the established order of service among its personnel. In this case, the violator of generally accepted rules and regulations was punished very severely. For example, for the late provision of routine monthly reporting, the perpetrator could have been arrested, as evidenced by the following document: “Arrest note. May [?] Of the day of 1914, the city of Irkutsk. Non-commissioned officer of the Irkutsk office of the GPDTBR Dmitry Baranchikov. Arrested by: Head of the office. The reason: for the delay of the protocol from April 30 to May 13 and its careless drafting. For what period: for five days. Type of arrest: simple. Head of the office lieutenant colonel (signature)” [13].

The appearance of the railway gendarme was of considerable importancebecause it was gendarme, whoembodies the steadfastness of state power, order and “blessing”. Here, for example, a typical order for the Gendarmerie Police Department of the Trans-Baikal Railway, issued on June 12, 1912: Heads of offices. By declaring non-commissioned officers in your local orders that each of them, who will be exposed to wearing outside their apartment walls, even if they have a uniform, but their clothes, wearing overshoes, unformed boots, and generally deviations from the uniform, will be dismissed from service in a disciplinary process. I order to establish unremitting supervision both for the strict fulfillment of the above and for the strict cleanliness and tidiness to be observed in the clothes of the lower ranks”.

Cases of drunkenness were considered as a gross violation of discipline, punishing immediate dismissal “in the order of disciplinary”. At the same time, the gendarmes, who showed a healthy “zeal” for the service, achieved success in investigative or operational work, were willingly and deservedly pointed out by the GPDTBR. The authorities in every way strived to encourage honest, the incorruptible performance of their duties. Here we present the text of the order on the department for February 28, 1905: “Presented by the head of the Irkutsk office at reports for No. 716 fifty rubles, given by Peter Chernigov in bribing to the non-commissioned officer Peter Vasilchenko and for No. 718 - fifty rubles given by peasant Peter Gushipov in bribing to non-commissioned officer ArkhipKirillov, to deposit money in the journal ..., in the column of transferring amounts, deposit in the Irkutsk provincial treasury a deposit of the wounded at the Alexander Committee. To these non-

commissioned officers express gratitudefor unselfishness and good service”.

Among the gendarmes of the Police Department of the Trans-Baikal Railway were those who were awarded “for the increased labor that was caused by wartime circumstances during the war with Japan, as well as during the unrest in the Empire.” So, on March 25, 1906, they were “Most Graciously Appointed”: Cavalry SergeantPyotrGorelov - with a silver necklace on the Stanislav ribbon; gold lapel medals on Annenskaya ribbon: Cavalry Sergeants Mikhail Luchko and Ivan Soldatov, non-commissioned officers Nikolai Govorushenko and Nikita Ivanko. Silver lapel medals on the Stanislavsky tape: non-commissioned officers Sergey Pilipenko, Nikita Fesenko, Daniil Kasner, YakovKhlopin, and also the clerk of the administration Peter Bessarabov.

What are the advantages of the service in the structure of the GPDTBR? Documents show that the salary of rail gendarmes was quite modest. According to the highest Opinion of the State Council approved on April 26, 1906, the allowance of the lower ranks of the provincial gendarme administrations, county gendarme administrations, gendarme police departments of railway and serf gendarme groups throughout the country made the following salaries: Cavalry Sergeant - 540 rublesand non-commissioned officer: the highest salary - 420 rubles, the average - 360 rubles and lower - 300 rubles per year.

At the same time, the Headquarters of the Separate corps of gendarmes allowed to “strengthen” the financial support of local servants “by increasing the percentage of lower ranks on higher salaries, eliminating the lower ones”. These led to the fact that in the gendarme police department of the Siberian Railway, non-commissioned officers in the lower salary in 1907 did not exist at all, and on average (360 rubles a year) there were 75% and on the highest (420 rubles) - 25%. In the Zabaykalsky, Ussuri and China-Eastern departments, the lower and middle salaries did not exist in principle, and all non-commissioned officers were salaried at 420 rubles per year.

Unlike gendarme non-commissioned officers, officers - heads of offices on the Trans-Baikal Railway besides salaries could get one-time surcharges. From the statement for April 1906, the sums for “canteens and daily allowances”, it follows that the head of the department, for example, was entitled to 467 rubles, the heads of offices the captain Khokhlachev - 233 rubles, Sattrute - 250, Kleifu - 322, Zhelenina - 367, Stakhursky - 287, Sokolsky - 276, assistant to the head of the department to the captain Anzhelo - 216 and captain-sent to the head of the captain Bulavin - 122 rubles. It is difficult to say how regular such payments were.

Summarizing the question of the monetary allowance for civil servants in the GPDTBR,it should be said that it was comparable to the allowance of general police officers in the Irkutsk province. So, for example, the salary of the annual maintenance of the Nizhneudinsk District Chief Police Officer was 1,500 rubles in the states of 1888, his assistant - 1,000 rubles, the local assessor - 1,200 rubles, police guards and secretary - 400 rubles each per year [14]. But the employees in the Prison Administration had a lower salary. Thus, on December 3, 1905, prison guards and wardens of the Irkutsk provincial prison, including 44 people, because of the extreme



costliness in the city of Irkutsk for essential goods, as well as apartments and firewood, addressed the governor to increase the allowance since November. It turned out that the senior warders had 40 rubles, the warders - 24 rubles 50 kopecks, and the junior - only 20 rubles per month [15].

The activity of the gendarme corps had a confidential nature. Even archival funds have preserved up to now only a small part of the secret work of the political police. However, the names of many officers contemporaries, oddly enough for us, could easily find in the city directories and guidebooks. The Irkutsk and Zabaikalsk Statistical Committees also produced such publications. On their pages were printed the names of all city and provincial officials, including gendarmes. Thus, according to the Memorial Book of the Zabaykalsky Krai for 1900, the Gendarme-Police Department of the Trans-Baikal Railway was represented by the following officers: the head - Colonel P. I. Birdin, adjutant - Lieutenant V. V. Plotnikov; heads of departments: Zabaykalsky - captain B. P. Nikolsky, Verkhneudinsky - captain N. A. Shupinsky, Yablonovsky - Lieutenant A. A. Korostelev (at Khilok station), Chitinsky - Captain G. N. Rebinder, Sretensky - Captain V. A. Lemeni-Macedon, Karymsky - Lieutenant Colonel O. O. Robuk.

By 1905, the structure of the Department and its composition had changed: Lieutenant Colonel Evstafiev became the acting head. According to the Imperial Highness of His Majesty the decree of December 6, 1905, he was promoted to colonel with the approval of the post. The cavalry captain G. N. Khokhlachev served as the Adjutant of the Department. At that time, the Verkhneudinsk office was headed by lieutenant colonel Kleif, captain Dudkin served as chief of Chita, captain N. N. Petlin served in the Irkutsk and V. K. Satterun was new Circum-Baikal headquarters captain.

In 1911, Colonel S. N. Martos headed the GPDTBR. The Manchurian office, headed by captain I. I. Greenberg, appeared in the structure of the Department. In 1916, the pre-revolutionary year, the last for the service year, the head of the Department was Colonel V. P. Grigorovich, the adjutant was the captain-general F. F. Fedorov, there were Irkutsk office, Baikal (Slyudyanka), Verkhneudinsk, Petrovsk-Zavodskoe, Chita, Sretenskoye, Buryat (Art. Olovyanaya). Also, the heads of the Irkutsk and Buryat offices had assistants at the stations Innokentievsk and Manchuria respectively.

As you can see, during the researched period, the structure of the Department remained largely unchanged, as new railway sections were added, new offices of the gendarme service were added, but their total number fluctuated slightly, within 5-7 units. The staff of the Department itself included only two positions - a chief and an adjutant, the position of a clerk was always held by a freelance civilian employee. Most of the heads of offices did not have full-time assistants, and only at the end of the period due to the increased revolutionary activity of railway workers caused the appearance of assistants in the Irkutsk and Buryat offices.

The gendarme police departments of the Empire's railways actively cooperated. One of the forms of such interaction was the constant exchange of personnel, practiced with the aim of timely strengthening, the concentration of forces in the areas that were experiencing heavy loads, which were, for example,

near the places of hostilities. Thus, during the Russo-Japanese War, employees of various departments were seconded to the GPDTBR. For example, on May 3, 1905, according to the order of the Chief of Staff of the Separate Corps, non-commissioned officer Wilhelm Dukat from the Moscow-Riga GPDR was transferred to the Chita office [12, Case 5. List 90]. The documents contain the names of employees who arrived at the temporary service from Odessa, Warsaw, Kiev, and the Moscow-Kamyshin section of the railway. Only in May 1905, for strengthening the personnel of the GPDTBR, there were set 27 non-commissioned officers.

The cooperation of the gendarme departments was not limited to the secondment of staff. Often more important was the exchange of secret information, which helped in the common struggle with the revolutionary and labor movement. For example, these are the lines from the secret correspondence of the head of the Nizhneudinsk office of the Gendarmerie Police Department of the Siberian Railway to the head of the Irkutsk provincial gendarme department of December 13, 1906: "It is my duty to report to you that, according to my intelligence information from the source, which never submitted false information, wanted former Chairman of the Nizhneudinsk Strike Committee and its chief cashier Ivan Aleksandrovich Trusov, a tradesman of the city of Ryazan, who was born on April 4, 1884, now serves in Omsk, in railway workshops, under someone else's surname. To this, I add that I will not inform and report on the preceding without your order, so as not to harm the search. Captain Gorodetsky" [16].

On duty, officers of the GPDTBR spent much of their working time on the road. Such employees were given a ticket, but not immediately when they entered the service, but only six months later. Members of the employee's family also got these tickets. However, if the gendarme non-commissioned officer was in civilian clothes and followed the train "for investigation", he was strictly forbidden to present his ticket by a special instruction letter from the headquarters of the Separate Corps. In this case, in order not to reveal his identity, he had to use the "official annual ticket to the" bearer "issued by the railway administration".

For the lower ranks of the GPDTBR there was also a special rule regulating their stay in the 1-2 class wagons. On May 15, 1910, the head of the Department explained in a special letter that "non-commissioned officers may follow in high-class wagons if they really need it" and only on the orders of their superior, and "after the assignment given to the non-commissioned officer, he should immediately go into the 3rd class wagon, which means that non-commissioned officers do not have the right to be in class 1 or 2 wagons with things, and even more stay for the night. The estate privileges within the gendarme department were thus also unshakable, as elsewhere.

The question of the relations of gendarme non-commissioned officers with general police officers was decided differently, and instructions were given at the highest level — by the commander of the Separate corps of gendarmes who were in the entourage of His Majesty Major General Dzhunkovsky. On September 5, 1914, his signature a letter addressed to the governors, heads of provincial and railway gendarme police departments, which stated: "In view of the

question that arose whether police officials have the right, when referring to gendarme non-commissioned officers, "you" is reported that within the meaning of art. 28 statute of internal service ed. 1910 ..., only officers can address the lower ranks for "you", to whom, according to the statute mentioned above, all officers are included, as well as officials to whom the lower ranks are directly subordinate. Police officers are not subordinate to the ranks of the Separate gendarmes' corps, and therefore, during intercourse, these officials should refer to the lower ranks of the Separate gendarmes' corps to "You". Still, the well-known animosity of the two departments was higher than the class dividers.

The officers and lower ranks of the gendarme department constantly studied and improved their professional skills. In addition to the marching exercises, they were engaged every month on various issues of their service. As a rule, these classes were conducted by the head of the department. So, in 1916, for example, he spent ten one-day classes, which lasted from 12 to 16 hours. The following topics were discussed here: the procedure for non-commissioned officers in the event of a train fire; violation of the rules of the construction regulations; the seizure of railway land and the non-release on time of apartments; deaths, body damage, mutilation and other injuries; crimes and offenses against property; verification of the mandatory knowledge of the protection of the imperial trains; examination of knowledge of articles of statutes of criminal procedure; assembly and disassembly of the automatic pistol Browning; reception and transmission of telegrams; rules of technical operation of railways; Statue of punishments imposed by magistrates; rules of the medical and sanitary service; device locomotives and their management. Besides, each lesson included acquaintance of non-commissioned officers with current events in the royal house, as well as bringing to the attention of new instructions, guidance, regulations, and orders for the body of gendarmes in general [17].

For the training of non-commissioned officers, there was centrally developed and printed a special journal consisting of questions and answers to them. In the GPDTBR, this magazine was called "Questions and Answers for training young non-commissioned officers. 1904." Here are some of them: "Question: What is the form of government in Russia? Answer: Autocratic monarchy, i.e. one Sovereign governs the state. Question: When does a new law take effect? Answer: Since it is announced in each locality. Question: Who can make and abolish laws in Russia? Answer: It is the Emperor's exclusive authority. Question: What types of passports exist? Answer: permanent, 5-year, annual and six-month. Question: What should be clarified in every crime first of all? Answer: It is necessary to find out whether the crime was committed with intent or without it".

In addition to the questions given as an example, there were very specific tasks concerning knowledge of measures of weight, distance, an order of disassembly and assembly of weapons, conditions for establishing public police supervision, etc. As you can see, the state took care of the comprehensive training of political police officers.

It should be pointed out one more time that the "delicate subject" has been worked out in detail - the question of the

subordination of non-commissioned officers and guards of the gendarme department to general-purpose officers. For example: "Question: Can a passing officer make orders to (a gendarme officer. - Auth.) a non-commissioned officer? Answer: No, he cannot. Question: How should the non-commissioned officer report (to the general-purpose officer - Auth.) to the officer if the latter turns to him with demand, the execution of which is not included in the duties of a non-commissioned officer? Answer: The non-commissioned officer must politely, with a hand to the visor, report that he cannot do this, but that this must be addressed here and there. If the officer turns to the non-commissioned officer with an order, pick up and take things out of the car or from the hall, then the non-commissioned officer must answer that he will now order the porter to do it".

#### IV CONCLUSION

Summarizing what has been said before, the Gendarme-Police Department of the Trans-Baikal Railway was created to maintain order and "decency" in trains and stations, as well as in the railway right of way entrusted to it. As general police officers, the employees of the Department carried out proper work on the prevention of offenses, monitored the health of the railroad tracks, and the safety of rolling stock. The GPDTBR was established in 1899. Its structure corresponded to the divisions of the road itself: the GPD, located in the Irkutsk, it supervised the work of the offices at the road stations. The total number of offices during the years 1899-1917 underwent only minor changes, remaining in the amount of 5-7 units. The authority consisted of the head and adjutant, the offices headed by the officers, non-commissioned officers, and ordinary guards. The main source of formation of the personnel of the railway gendarmes were army lower ranks, dismissed by age. The salaries of the GPDTBR gendarmes were low and corresponded to the salaries of military officers. The total number of employees nearly reached 200 people, but the staff was chronically lacking. Strict discipline was established in the Department, each rank knew the site of his service and was responsible for the quality of its performance [18]. The gendarmes constantly studied, updating their knowledge in the field of railway management and economy, as well as in the humanitarian and social spheres. The skillful organization of the daily work of the personnel, the optimal management structure, high production discipline and readiness to replenish their knowledge - all this made the work of the GPDTBR very professional and effective.

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