

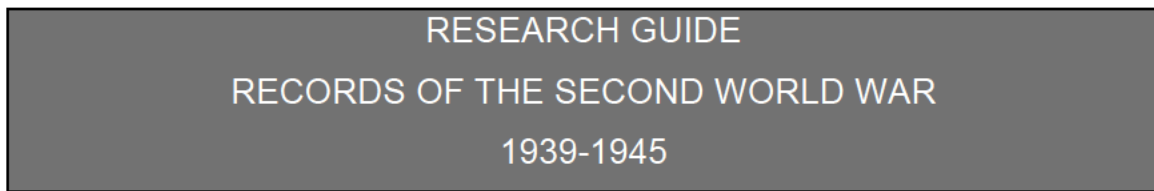
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FRENCH NATIONAL RAILWAY (SNCF) RECORDS, 1939–1945

Centre for Historical Archives, Le Mans

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Summary of records kept at the SNCF Centre for Historical Archives

September 2011

**VERSION
FINALE**

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In cooperation with Laurence Bour, Centre Manager.

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INTRODUCTION

This status report¹ has been drawn up to provide readers with an inventory of the records available at SNCF for the 1939-1945 period.

Documents are stored at the Centre for Historical Archives in Le Mans and may be consulted by appointment² in its reading room.

To simplify research, the archives have been classified according to the branch of the company to which they relate³ and take the form of record sheets.

Record sheets

The record sheets are organised as follows:

- Sheets 1 to 4 relate to the Corporate Executive
- Sheets 5 to 11 concern the corporate functions
- Sheets 12 to 16 deal with the five SNCF Regions⁴ and provide details of contributions from the Regional divisions and their various sub-divisions

For each of these categories, readers will find the following information:

- A note on the organisation of the functions during the Second World War
- The contents of the archives for 1939-1945, extracted from the records as a whole⁵. In all, these amount to just over 400 linear metres of material⁶ described in this guide.
- A table showing the reference numbers and the numbers of cartons of records for 1939-1945.

The last two record sheets supply additional information. Sheet 17 provides references to the regulations governing the SNCF organisation. Sheet 18 highlights the vast wealth of documentary resources available.

Digitisation of the records for 1939-1945

Work on digitisation began in May 2011 and concerns all the records for the wartime period in the keeping of the Centre for Historical Archives in Le Mans. Some major themes stand out: relations with the occupying power, wartime operation of the company, statutory texts produced and decisions made by the Board of Directors between 1939 and 1945. All this adds up to just under

¹ This document is an updated version of the work first produced by Laurence Bour in August 2002: *Etat sommaire des versements conservés par le Centre des Archives historiques de la SNCF incluant des archives de la période 1938-1948 [Status of the contributions in the keeping of the SNCF Centre of Historical Archives, including the archives for the 1938-1948 period]*

² SNCF Centre for Historical Archives, 2 avenue de Bretagne 72100 Le Mans. Open to the public from 8.15 to 12.00 and from 13.00 to 16.30, from Mondays to Fridays.

³ N.B.: the archives of the Main Rolling Stock Department do not contain any documents essential to the study of this period, so there is no record sheet for this department.

⁴ These regions being North, East, West, South-West and South-East.

⁵ For more precise details of these documents, please consult the corresponding inventory.

⁶ Some of the cartons of records in the inventory have been included even though they contain very little material on the 39-45 period.

600,000 pages, which is more appropriate way of measuring the volume than in linear metres. In the end, very few cartons of records were digitised in full. It was, in fact, necessary to sift out those documents not relating to the period under consideration.

Since SNCF is insistent upon maintaining transparency with regard to all its documents and records, while remaining compliant with the rules in force governing the time that must elapse before their entry into the public domain, all the analyses made of the records kept for the period between 1939 and 1945 are available in the *Guide de recherches sur la Seconde Guerre mondiale [Guide to Research on the Second World War]*.

Research material

The 112 different sources of documentary information in this status report have been carefully stored and may be easily accessed by those wishing to consult them. Some hard copy research material is available at the Centre for Historical Archives in Le Mans. For other material, it is necessary to go via the MAÏS application⁷, which may be accessed from the reading room (keyword "39-45"). Those interested should consult the appendix⁸ to this status report, which contains a table showing how each contribution received at the Centre has been handled.

The electronic version of the research material will soon be available on the SNCF Intranet.

Access conditions

Entry into the public domain

The SNCF archives are public property. They are therefore governed by the Act of 15 July 2008 outlined in Volume II of the *Code du Patrimoine* [Cultural Heritage Code].

However, indications regarding when these archives will enter the public domain given in the research material should be ignored. These have been superseded by new legislation. Unless otherwise specified in this guide, all the archives for the 1939-1945 period are freely accessible.

Some documents are, however, only available in electronic form, the originals being too fragile to stand up to frequent handling and also for greater convenience.

Exceptions

Records that contain personal information and those concerning railway accidents form an exception to the principle of free accessibility. Exceptions may, however, be made regarding their consultation before they officially enter the public domain. To obtain permission to consult the records concerned, an application must be made to the Archives Centre in Le Mans. This will have to be submitted to the French Inter-Ministerial Archives Department, which will reject or accept the application after consulting the authority that provided the material or is responsible for its conservation.

⁷ MAÏS (maîtrise de l'archivage et de l'information stratégique) is an information system common to all SNCF Archive Centres and may be used throughout the company. Basically intended for all those responsible for managing or compiling archives, it follows the documents concerned throughout their life cycle: description of current archives, management tables (storage periods), new entries, deletions, research and dissemination requests, etc.

⁸ Appendix 1: page 41.

RECORD SHEET 1

Secretariat to the Board of Directors and Executive Committee

The SNCF is managed by a Board of Directors and a Corporate Executive⁹. It is the Board of Directors that has the greatest powers. During the Second World War, it was made up of 20 members¹⁰: ten representing the public authorities, five appointed by the Boards of Directors of the former private railway companies and five staff representatives proposed by the trade union organisations.

The archives from the Secretariat of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee offer a wealth of information for anyone wishing to conduct research into the history of the company.

Contents

Among the records relevant for study of the Second World War, mention may be made of:

- The company records of Board of Directors (final versions of minutes, meeting notes, working documents circulated, final agendas and provisional agendas with their corrections)
- The company records of the SNCF Executive Committee until October 1940, when it ceased to exist (draft and final agendas, lists of attendees and absentees, working documents circulated, shorthand records of discussions, drafts and final texts of minutes)
- The company records of the Ordinary and Extraordinary General Meetings of SNCF shareholders (notification of and letters convening meetings, Reports from the Board of Directors to the Assembly, Auditors' reports, attendance sheets, placement diagrams, meeting notes, drafts and final texts of minutes)
- Company annual reports
- The correspondence of the Secretariat of the Board of Directors for the 39-45 period and a covering list of topics
- The files produced by the Secretariat of the Board of Directors for Board and Executive Committee members (excerpts from the minutes of the Board of Directors or Executive Committee, statutory texts and correspondence – in particular between SNCF and the Ministry of Public Works)

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0041LM	94 files
0043LM	137 files
0044LM	118 files

⁹ cf. record sheet 2, page 7.

¹⁰ Since 1 January 1956, the SNCF Board of Directors has comprised 18 members.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0045LM	255 files
0505LM	2751 files
0619LM	11 files

Alongside the research material, readers may also consult the classification system for all the documentary files produced by the Board Secretariat¹¹. There is also a recapitulation giving details of the basic material¹² consulted by Christian Bachelier¹³ and listed in the *Guide des sources historiques conservées aux Archives de Paris*¹⁴.

Access conditions

Free access to records.

¹¹ The main categories are the following: Traffic issues; Rolling stock issues; Fixed installations; HR issues; Operating issues; Financial issues; Supplies, orders and contracts; SNCF general organisation; External relations.

¹² The files kept in the archives add up to some 6 linear metres.

¹³ BACHELIER Christian, *La SNCF sous l'Occupation allemande, 1940-1944, Rapport documentaire*, [SNCF under the German occupation, 1940-44, Documentary report] Paris, IHTP-CNRS, 1996, 1534 p. ; 914 p. in 2 volumes, + 2 volumes of appendices.

¹⁴ GRAND Philippe, LAINÉ Brigitte, VERDIER Pascale, under the leadership of JENN Jean-Marie, *Paris Archives, 1939-1945. Guide des sources historiques conservées aux Archives de Paris [Guide to historical sources stored at the Paris Archives]*, Archives de Paris, 1994, p. 1117 to 1121.

RECORD SHEET 2

Secretariat to the Corporate Executive

The Secretariat to the Corporate Executive was responsible for incoming and outgoing mail, filing, archiving, links with regional divisions and corporate functions, file numbering, printing and circulating instructions and preparing official trips on behalf of the Chief Executive and his Deputy.

Contents

The importance of the topic-oriented files compiled by this Secretariat as part of its routine activities should not be underestimated.

It is here in particular that the correspondence of Secretariat W, the special office of the Secretariat to the Corporate Executive, responsible for translating communications between SNCF and the German authorities, may be found peppering the various files.

In addition, there are large numbers of files relating to military affairs, and records from the Central Railway Commission dealing with preparations for war. Readers will also find information about commemorative events, the Legion of Honour, military medals and acts of courage.

Documents take a variety of different forms: letters, memos, orders issued by the Ministry, MOUs, agreements, decrees, orders, instructions, leaflets, acts, bills, programmes, papers.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0020LM	101 files
0068LM	18 files
0138LM	90 files

In addition to this research material, readers may to consult the classification system for all the files at the Secretariat to the Corporate Executive, a plan that will enable them to search for data on the basis of fairly broad themes.

Access conditions

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 3

Claims Department

When SNCF was first founded, the Claims Department took over the role of the Joint Claims Department created in 1933 at the time of the major private French railway companies. It was responsible for examining the legal issues arising from railway operations, acting on behalf of the company in relation to all civil, administrative, penal and labour jurisdictions, and formalising all property transactions.

The Claims Department had three sub-divisions: a Legal Secretariat, a Commercial Affairs and Accidents sub-division and a sub-division for Civil, Administrative, Criminal and Fiscal affairs, all three further sub-divided into bureaux.

The material at our disposal stems from:

- the Legal Secretariat (I)
- the General Affairs bureau of the Legal Secretariat (II)
- the Bureau for accidents subject to ordinary law of the Commercial Affairs, Accidents, Criminal affairs and Insurance sub-division (III)

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0375LM	111 files

Contents

I) Case law rulings on the railways from 1939 to 1945

These records were compiled by the Joint Claims Department of the major private French railway companies, a task subsequently taken over by the Legal Secretariat.

The collections of rulings were designed to inform the various departments of the latest developments in case law, in order to avoid wasting time and money in taking cases unnecessarily to court.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0412LM	9 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

II) Bureau of General Affairs

This bureau had the role of giving advice and investigating the various matters referred to it by the other sections of the Claims Division or the different SNCF Regions, advising staff and supervising developments in cases before the Council of State, the Prefecture Councils, the arbitration tribunals, criminal courts or the Court of Cassation (the highest appellate court).

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0388LM	239 files
0390LM	323 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

III) Bureau for Accidents under ordinary law

The records in this case are those relating to claims connected with railway accidents affecting passengers or third parties, for all of the Regions taken together. They comprise accident reports, enquiry findings, letters exchanged between the Claims Department and the Regional Operating departments, expert medical reports, receipts and other documents in support of requests for refund of medical expenses, the pleas lodged by the SNCF lawyer or those acting on his behalf, copies of court rulings (ordinary, criminal or appeal courts), receipts for compensation paid to victims, records of payment of lawyers' fees, reports on such matters submitted to the SNCF Chief Executive by the Claims Department.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0005LM	964 files

The Archive Centre in Le Mans keeps a list of information about the dates of all accidents, the places where they occurred and the Regions concerned. In addition, the ledgers for accidents from 1933 to 1978 are available on CD-ROM (0518LM002) and in aperture card form (0005LM842).

Access conditions

Given the nature of the data concerned, details will be made available at the request of the particular staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

RECORD SHEET 4

Budget Department

Since it was first established in 1937, the Budget Department has come under the General Secretariat. Bylaw 2 of 1 January 1938 sets out its purpose as follows “*responsible for drawing up the annual budgets, revising them on a quarterly basis, monitoring income and outgoings to warn of any risks of imbalance*”. It was also placed in charge of “*tracking [...] the expenditure under the different budgets, checking [...] all cost allocations and verifying the asset position [...] of the different establishments.*”

In 1939, its activities were organised around three competence clusters: operating budget, investment budget and audits & enquiries. In 1941 the department underwent slight structural changes and was split into three sub-divisions: “General Affairs”, “Operations” and “Investment”

Contents

A distinction may be made between the records for the operating and investment budgets, the investment plans of the different establishments, investment outlay and operating results.

There are also a number of documents, often produced by the Main Personnel Department, on the status of the workforce. These provide interesting input of a statistical and sociological nature for the period with which we are concerned, a difficult time for the company.

It is also worth remembering that these budget archives are the earliest for SNCF, recently nationalised at the time.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0187LM	246 files
0179LM	13 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 5

Main Technical Administration Department, subsequently Corporate Administrative Division

The Corporate Administrative Division was responsible for conducting studies into organisational issues¹⁵ at the request of the Chief Executive, and for the annual or future programmes of the SNCF¹⁶. It also had the task of centralising all questions relating to mechanised systems, statistics, technical documentation, transport production costs and the output of major rolling stock.

Contents

The records of the Corporate Administrative Division contain a large amount of Secretariat W correspondence¹⁷.

The issues addressed are many and various:

- Matters of general organisation, especially the organisation of relations with the German authorities in compliance with the Armistice Agreement
- Rolling stock issues: hire, orders and deliveries of rolling stock, especially to the German authorities; fleet numbers and rolling stock inventories; sums owed to SNCF for rolling stock utilisation; return of vehicles annexed by the Germans
- Fixed installations issues (track, buildings, structures): records on building, reconstruction and maintenance work conducted at the request of the occupying authorities
- Commercial issues: records regarding German or Allied transport movements (military or special, etc.) and their execution
- Operations issues: prevention of acts of sabotage in connection with train movements, protection of staff against air raids
- Financial matters: records connected with services provided by SNCF, especially to the German authorities (but also to the Allies), billing for such services and settlement of costs

The records also include:

- Documents on the railway detachment to the French occupation troops in Germany (preparatory phase)
- Memos setting out decisions made by the Chief Executive at the various conferences staged in the 39-45 period
- Records concerning the classification of statutory texts and archives

¹⁵ Merging, combining, simplifying functions and refreshing methods.

¹⁶ Operations, Rolling stock and Fixed installations

¹⁷ Turn to Page 7 of the guide for an explanation concerning Secretariat W.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0026LM	141 files
0238LM	13 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 6

Main Personnel Department

From 30 October 1939, the Main Personnel Department Service was organised in two divisions:

- The Main Personnel Administration Division in charge of everything to do with staff, relations with trade unions, relations with the military authorities, staff administration and preparation of instructions
- The Main Social Services and Medical Division, also in charge of preventing accidents at work, staff leisure and housing issues

It should also be noted that a third main division was later established to deal with Pensions.

Contents

I) Staff records

The records contained in this collection deal with the following topics:

- Military affairs connected with the requisitioning of retirees and more generally with the mobilisation of manpower, retrenchment and repatriation of services, special allocation of employees, railway sections in the country
- Aid granted to staff or the families of staff injured or killed in the war
- Decorations and awards
- Files on staff relating to administrative purges

In addition, the records also include archives connected with communist and Free French (Gaullist) activities among railwaymen, disciplinary sanctions during the period, administrative purges, various amnesties, and end-of-war career reviews.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0025LM	240 files
0274LM	43 files
0202LM	15 files

Access conditions

Given the nature of the data concerned, 0274LM will be made available at the request of the particular staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

II) Named files

These contain information on index cards, compiled by the Main Personnel Department on the following subjects:

- Manpower developments
- War and occupation victims
- Railway resistance activities
- Sanctions applied to SNCF personnel
- Forced labour
- Purges

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0118LM	296 files

Conditions regarding access and consultation

Free access to records but, given their fragile nature, all hard copy documents have been digitised. These are available via hypertext links in the electronic version of the research material. Controls are in force as regards their reproduction. There are also three CD-ROM under reference 0518LM003.

RECORD SHEET 7

Finance Department

During the Second World War, the Finance Department comprised two divisions: the Main Finance Division and the Main Accounts Division.

Most of the documents from that time originated in the Debt Clearance Bureau, which came under the General Ledger Sub-division, itself a part of the Main Accounts Division. This was the Sub-division responsible for centralising all SNCF accounting operations, financial accounts, monthly balances, settlement of year-end accounts.

Contents

In finance and accounting terms, the following are some of the issues emerging from the records of the Debt Clearance Bureau:

- Financial relations between SNCF and the French State and with other third parties: annual annuities payable or receivable, funds advanced by or repaid to the Treasury
- Coverage of corporate expenditure
- Accounts opened in the company name, operating and miscellaneous other accounts
- Audits and financial supporting documents
- Year-end settlement and final sign-off of the accounts
- Balances and ledgers
- Reconciliation of the accounts of the former private railway companies
- Copies of letters from the Debt Clearance Bureau and the General Ledger Sub-division.

Other records of interest to those studying the period include:

- Constitution, administration and organisation of SNCF
- Constitution and administration of the Société Anonyme Royale des Chemins de fer Guillaume Luxembourg
- Budget issues
- Tax issues
- Statistics
- International bodies and railways in other countries
- Matters connected with services performed for the German authorities

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0203LM	1 file
0241LM	329 files

0242LM	19 files
0307LM	11 files
0325LM	207 files
0188LM	2 files

In addition to the research material available, there is also a classification system for the files of the Debt Clearance Bureau.

Conditions regarding access and consultation

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 8

Supplies, Orders and Contracts Department

The Supplies, Orders and Contracts Department was set up in 1937. It had five divisions¹⁸:

- The Supplies Division, which was responsible for handling all company supplies with the exception of fuels, which was the task of the Supplies Department.
- The Orders Division, which was in charge of procuring the products required by the Supplies Department.
- The Manufacturing Audit Division in charge of following up orders, technical supervision of works, compilation and adaptation of technical specifications not directly produced by the appropriate technical departments, albeit acting under their supervision. It also had the role of providing technical and sales information, etc. to the Supplies and Orders Department and to the Main Administration Department.
- The Fuel Division in charge of fuel supplies.
- The Contract Audit Division in charge of both producing standard rules for drafting contracts and for verifying all the contracts, of whatever nature, signed by SNCF.

In January 1939, a sixth division was created:

- The Electrical Power Division, whose role was to handle all aspects relating to the production, transport and distribution of high voltage current, purchase and sale of electrical power.

The Department was also responsible for managing the SNCF procurement accounts and supervising matters connected with industrial mobilisation.

In 1943, the department was renamed "Supplies Department".

Contents

The records have been obtained from the offices of Mr. Kipfer, who was a senior engineer in the Supplies, Orders and Contracts Department ¹⁹.

Documents cover aspects such as the role and workings of the department during and immediately after the Second World War under the following headings:

- Organisation of a supplies department in wartime
- Special allocations
- Weapons-related issues
- Department retrenchment
- Status of supplies at SNCF

¹⁸ To discover more about the way this department worked at the very beginning, readers are advised to consult General memo 8 of February 1938 entitled "Provisional instructions regarding the workings of the Supplies, Orders and Contracts Department" filed under PNV3888/1.

¹⁹ The organisation chart may be consulted under 138LM315.

- Role of the Organising Committees
- Signature of contracts and pricing regulations
- Relations with the German authorities
- Relations with the Allied authorities

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0438LM	32 files

Conditions regarding access and consultation

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 9

Commercial Department

During the Second World War, the Commercial Department had four divisions: Passenger Traffic, Coordination, Freight Traffic, General Affairs & Advertising. These were responsible for agreeing and enforcing the services to be offered to customers, in association with the other branches of the Corporate Executive.

When it was first set up, the Commercial Department was therefore in charge of both passengers and freight. It was in 1976 that it split into two parts: the Passenger Commercial Department (renamed the Main-Line Department in 1992) and the Freight Commercial Department (renamed the Freight Department in 1991).

Contents

I) Corporate Passenger Traffic Division

This division had the task of monitoring passenger traffic sales and ensuring the follow-up of major issues such as fare structures. In the records, readers will be able to find details of changes made in passenger fares at the time and application of the different fare scales.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0252LM	98 files

In addition to this research material, readers may like to consult the classification system adopted for records regarding the commercial issues involved in passenger transport.

Access conditions

Free access to records.

II) Central (transport) Coordination Division

These archives consist of wartime and peacetime passenger transport schedules, for most of the French administrative areas (*départements*)

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0204LM	42 files

Readers may like to know that the most important documents in these records of local transport schedules are available in microfiche form²⁰.

Access conditions

Free access to records.

III) Communications materials

1) Collections of posters

Readers will be interested to know that there exist a number of advertising and propaganda posters for the 1939-1945 period. All posters published during the war had to bear the reference ORAFF followed by a series of figures, this reference having to be an integral part of the printed document. This was the stamp of the "Office de répartition de l'affichage", a supervisory body created by the German authorities in November 1941 and under their control.

Posters deal with the following main topics:

- Safety
- The battle for coal
- Solidarity week
- Theft
- Sabotage of locomotives

Some of them were published in magazines but these are not kept at the Le Mans Centre. Readers will find an inventory of these posters in the research material.

2) Brochures

These are cardboard-backed advertising documents originally filed by the Commercial Department together with details of the number of copies printed.

- Freight advertising brochures
- Tourist brochures
- Advertising documents (brochures and flyers)

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0998LM	5 files

²⁰ Reference 0204LM1.

RECORD SHEET 10

Main Fixed Installations (and Construction) Department

This department was responsible for infrastructure, track and trackside equipment, level crossings, bridges & tunnels, electrical installations, telecommunications, signal boxes and other safety installations. It had the task of designing and having construction and major modification works carried out in response to requests from the Regions and branches of the Corporate Executive. It was also responsible for maintenance policy and methods. In 1972, its name was changed to Civil Engineering Department.

For the moment, we have very few archives for the 39-45 period from this department to recommend to readers: a few odd files collected by Raymond Amisse of the Civil Engineering Department (General Studies Division) and interface with the Railway Museum in Mulhouse.

Contents

The records available concern a variety of topics:

- Construction or upgrading work on various lines
- Track alignment and maintenance
- Civil engineering structures
- Fixed equipment (technical documents)
- Training for District Managers and managers responsible for Track & Buildings in the SNCF Regions

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0760LM	3 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 11

Main Traffic Department

This department was renamed Transport Department in 1972, before changing its name once again to Infrastructure Department in 1995. In conjunction with the Commercial Departments, the Traffic Department was involved in preparing the services to be marketed vis-à-vis the customer. It was responsible for organisation all passenger and freight transport movements and for supervising their execution. In this capacity, it decided on the resources required, in both quality and quantity terms and in association with the relevant branches of the Corporate Executive: station and line facilities and equipment, and transport activities for those establishments with dual Rolling Stock and Transport functions. In association with railways in other countries, it agreed the general conditions for the use of these resources (in particular the rules on safety and workforce deployment) and was generally in charge of monitoring all train movements. In addition, it organised and coordinated efforts to prevent theft and fraud.

Contents

I) Operating Systems Division, Central Division for Regulations and Safety

The records contained in this collection address the following issues:

- Preparation of safety regulations or instructions for the regions
- Examination of regional enquiry reports into accidents and incidents.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0018LM	66 files

Access conditions

Free access to records, except for those concerning accidents, for which permission is required in compliance with the laws governing archives and the public domain. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

II) Safety and Transport Division

Under this reference it is possible to find records relating to telephone installations and links, including the regulations in force in the 1939-1945 period.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0225LM	30 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

III) Traction and Movements Division

The type of document found under this heading varies widely: statistics, driver rosters, duty rosters, traffic reports, daily records, accidents-incidents.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0662LM	8 files

Access conditions

Free access to records, except for those concerning accidents, for which permission is required in compliance with the laws governing archives and the public domain. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

IV) General Affairs Division, Budget and Management Audits Division

The records here deal with issues relating to line operating conventions and treaties between SNCF and its European partners: Deutsche Bahn (DB), Ferrovie dello Stato, Chemins de fer du Luxembourg, Red Nacional de Ferrocarriles Españoles (RENFE), etc.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0756LM	4 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 12

North Region

When it was first established, SNCF was made up of a Corporate Executive, Main Departments and Regional Divisions. In 1938, all the lines on the network were split between 5 Regions²¹ - East, North, West, South-East, South-West²² - all headquartered in Paris. Their existence bore witness to the company's involvement in the Regions.

Each Regional Division had three main departments: Traction & Rolling Stock, Track & Buildings and Operations.

The Operations Directors heading the individual SNCF Regions were answerable to the Chief Executive as regards ensuring rail services, issuing orders to staff, maintaining close contacts with customers and their authorised representatives, proposing or introducing all measures to boost traffic, enhance services and ensure cost-effective operations. They were responsible for executing the orders or instructions of the Chief Executive, or those issued in his name by the Main Department Directors.

The Regions were then divided into sectors: MT (Traction & Rolling Stock²³), EX (Operations), VB (Track & Buildings²⁴). These covered two or three sub-sectors and were headed by a Sector Manager.

Track & Buildings is the source of the majority of the archives for the North Region kept at the Centre in Le Mans.

Contents

I) Track & Buildings Department of the North Region

1) General Affairs

Records concerning the network as a whole on a number of different subjects:

- Level crossings
- Track
- Accidents and incidents
- Buildings and miscellaneous structures
- Transport
- Rails
- Tools
- Circulars

²¹ Details of the boundaries of the Regions are given in bylaw 1 dated 1 January 1939

²² The Mediterranean Region, headquartered in Marseilles, was set up on 1 October 1947.

²³ The "Traction & Rolling Stock" sectors comprised depots, locomotive, coach or wagon sheds.

²⁴ The "Track & Buildings" sectors were split into sub-sectors, in turn divided into districts and still further into block sections.

- Talks
- Occupation of the public domain
- Sleepers
- Committees, Commissions and Congresses
- Signalling

2) Local Affairs (lines)

Records concerning lines or sections of line:

- Works
- Damage
- Taxes
- Fire
- Claims
- Land and buildings (acquisitions, disposals, exchanges, etc.)
- Private sidings or works for third parties
- Occupation of the public domain
- Level crossings

3) Local Affairs (main and smaller stations, major and minor halts)

Records concerning main and smaller stations, major and minor halts:

- Operating works
- Maintenance works
- Private sidings
- Urban spur lines
- Port tracks
- Occupation of the public domain
- Property issues

The references listed in the table below concern the various subjects mentioned above.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0003LM	273 files
0050LM	13 files
0099LM	35 files
0184LM	44 files
0221LM	107 files

4) Railway signalling

Archives and internal documentation on railway signalling: talks by heads of Track & Buildings districts, signalling inspectors, signalling services, collection of general and regional orders, etc.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0033LM	11 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

II) Operations Department of the North Region

The Centre in Le Mans keeps a collection of archives from the Administrative Secretariat of the Director of the North Region. This consists of the individual records of staff arrested, imprisoned and deported by the German authorities for whatever reason (essentially theft and resistance activities), general documents on medals and awards (military medals, Order of Merit, Legion of Honour), and weekly regional conferences.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0279LM	53 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 13

South-West Region

Readers are referred to page 24 of the guide²⁵ and to its appendices, for more details about the SNCF's regional organisation.

Contents

I) Traction & Rolling Stock Department of the South-West Region

1) Personnel

These archives may be used to study the history of railway workers in the Traction & Rolling Stock Department of the South-West Region during the Second World War.

They contain documents on the following subjects:

- Changes in staffing levels throughout SNCF as a whole
- Authorised workforce
- Mobilisation categories
- Staff subject to disciplinary sanctions during the occupation
- Employees from Alsace or Lorraine temporarily or permanently transferred to the South-West
- Staff arrested, imprisoned and, in some cases, deported by the German authorities
- Staff war victims (air raids, machine gunning, sabotage)
- Staff affected by administrative purges at the Liberation

The types of document vary widely: instructions, statutory texts, correspondence, individual records, staff lists, statistical tables.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0073LM	44 files
0243LM	4 files
0303LM	138 files
V104963	10 files

2) Derailment and collisions involving trains and rolling stock

In collection 0084LM readers will find documents of different sorts: accident reports and information requests, photographs, rulings, etc.

²⁵ cf. Record sheet 11: North Region

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0084LM	13 files

3) Fleet status, use and down times of tractive and hauled stock

Collection 0086LM provides rolling stock inventories and statistics for train weights and distances.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0086LM	30 files

Access conditions

Free access to records, except for those concerning staff and accidents, for which permission is required in compliance with the laws governing archives and the public domain. They may be released at the request of a staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents. This must be done by contacting the Archive Centre in Le Mans.

II) Track & Buildings Department of the South-West Region

These records contain files on military and passive defence manoeuvres in relation to fixed installations (track, terminus and other stations, halts), most of which were compiled at the time of the Compagnie du Paris-Orléans. The types of document vary widely: layouts, technical fact sheets, correspondence, instructions from the Ministry.

There are also files on divisional retrenchments and weekly reports on events relating to the French delegations to the Eisenbahnbetriebsdirektionen (German railway operations departments) in Paris-South, Bordeaux and Toulouse.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0039LM	60 files

The following sets of records specifically concern files on work done to upgrade and maintain fixed installations (track, buildings, civil engineering structures) dating from the days of the private railway companies. These are of the following types: layouts, longitudinal profiles and correspondence.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0040LM	19 files
0236LM	11 files

Reference 0643LM contains photographs of bridges and tunnels destroyed and rebuilt, classified according to line.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0643LM	19 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

III) Operations Department of the South-West Region

1) Treaties and conventions over line operations

These records date back, for the most part, to the days of the Paris-Orléans railway company. They comprise treaties, maps and correspondence.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0047LM	6 files

2) Railway accident records

These are files on claims relating to injuries or loss of life.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0037LM	1 file

3) Bordeaux Operations Sector

The archives here deal essentially with the secondment of personnel to the Deutsche Reichsbahn.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0407LM	24 files

Access conditions

Free access to the records for the period, except for those concerning staff and accidents for which permission is required in compliance with the laws governing archives and the public domain. They may be released at the request of a staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

IV) Limoges Regional Division

The records in this collection consist of documents from three regional functions (Track & Buildings, Operations, Traction & Rolling Stock) on the following main issues:

- Disciplinary hearings and disciplinary action
- Amnesties (lists of punishments and sanctions amnestied)
- Fatal accidents at or on the way to work, deaths in service

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0860LM	12 files

Access conditions

Given the nature of the information, records may be released at the request of a staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

V) Regional Property Agency, Bordeaux

Archive 1318LM comprises records on land requisitioned by the Germans and wartime damage to fixed installations. Essentially it contains photos of facilities destroyed.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
1318LM	15 files

RECORD SHEET 14

West Region

Readers are referred to page 24 of the guide²⁶ and to its appendices, for more details about the SNCF's regional organisation.

Contents

I) Operations Department of the West Region

This collection contains individual staff records:

- Staff sanctioned for communist or unpatriotic activities
- Staff arrested, imprisoned, deported by the German authorities for different reasons (theft, resistance activities, etc.)
- Staff injured in wartime (accidents at work)
- Medical files on staff laid off work permanently or temporarily on medical grounds

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0201LM	88 files

The Central Archive in Béziers²⁷ keeps the records of former and retired employees, which could provide additional information about staff members whose files are included in this collection.

Access conditions

Given the nature of the information, records may be released at the request of a staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

II) Track & Buildings Sector, Nantes

Reference 0432LM consists of photo albums:

- Reconstruction of civil engineering structures after their destruction in 1944-1945 (classified according to line)
- Destruction of buildings.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0432LM	4 files

Some of these photographs are available on CD-ROM under reference 0432LM1.

²⁶ cf. Record sheet 11: North Region

²⁷ Centre des Archives Multirégional, Rue du lieutenant Pasquet, 34500 Béziers.

Access conditions:

Free access to records.

III) Traction & Rolling Stock Sector

1) Le Mans

Records consist essentially of reports from the depots in Le Mans, Chartres, Alençon, Château-du-Loir and Laval.

They concern several subjects:

- Daily personnel status
- Daily situation as regards bomb damage
- Passive defence and reconstruction
- Status of power units (locomotives)
- Staff arrested and imprisoned for various reasons (theft, anti-German activities, resistance, unknown reasons, etc.)

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0489LM	31 files
V106883	12 files

2) Achères

The reference quoted refers to records of the destruction of the depot in 1944 and its reconstruction in 1946 and contains photos, for the most part.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0780LM	1 file

Access conditions

Free access to records.

RECORD SHEET 15

South-East Region

Readers are referred to page 24 of the guide²⁸ and to its appendices, for more details about the SNCF's regional organisation.

The records kept at Le Mans come in part from the Operations Sectors of the South-East and Mediterranean Regions²⁹.

Contents

I) Treaties and study reports

These are records of treaties signed at the time by the Compagnie du Paris-Lyon-Méditerranée and then by SNCF (stations in the Operations areas of Saint-Etienne and Lyons):

- Operation of private sidings
- Occupation of sites and services connecting with them

Documents come in a variety of forms: treaties, codicils, correspondence, plans, study reports.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0300LM	103 files

II) Labour relations

These records concern the various stations in the Valence Operations sector and revolve around three main subjects:

- Staff numbers
- Changes in the authorised workforce
- Organisation of labour

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0297LM	13 files

III) Transport

- Coordination of rail and road passenger transport in the *départements* of Alpes Maritimes, Vaucluse, Var, Bouches-du-Rhône, Hautes-Alpes and Alpes de Haute Provence
- Establishment or application of transport plans and traffic sharing agreements.

²⁸ cf. Record sheet 11: North Region

²⁹ The Mediterranean Region was set up in Marseilles in 1946.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0028LM	24 files

IV) Clermont-Ferrand Regional Department

A number of topics stand out:

- Military organisation on the railway (relations with the armed forces, technical remits and military commissions, mined bridges/tunnels/viaducts, etc.)
- Installations (rolling stock, national defence, passive defence)
- Management of military documents and regulations (demobilisation of the armed forces)

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0678LM	29 files

V) Railway accidents

These are records of railway accidents occurring for the most part in the *départements* of Bouches-du-Rhône, Vaucluse and Hautes-Alpes.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0052LM	10 files

VI) Individual staff records

Several subjects may be listed:

- Accidents at work for the Lyons Operations area
- Disciplinary measures for the Valence Operations area (sanctions enforced by the occupying authorities, repression followed by amnesties for those accused of collaboration, instructions for staff, information about staff deported).

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0296LM	4 files
0266LM	26 files

Access conditions

Free access to records, except for those concerning staff and accidents, for which permission is required in compliance with the laws governing archives and the public domain. They may be released at the request of a staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

RECORD SHEET 16

East Region

Readers are referred to page 24 of the guide³⁰ and to its appendices, for more details about the SNCF's regional organisation.

The archives for the East Region almost all come from the Track & Buildings Department.

Contents

I) Track & Buildings Department

These records first date from the time of the Compagnie des Chemins de fer de l'Est and were taken over at SNCF by the Track & Buildings Department. They include a large number of ledgers and deal with the following subjects:

- Signals, interlocking and safety measures
- Telegraphy and telephony
- Operations
- Accidents and incidents
- Maintenance of earthworks, track, structures and buildings
- Acquisitions
- Property
- Stations, termini and halts, including military installations
- Bridges and tunnels, etc.
- Level crossings and gatekeepers' houses
- Private sidings and concessions in stations
- Damage to the network (service despatches, reports, photographs, maps, statements, notes, correspondence)

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0093LM	11 files
0101LM	9 files
0102LM	15 files
0103LM	5 files
0104LM	5 files
0105LM	28 files

³⁰ cf. Record sheet 11: North Region

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0107LM	16 files
0108LM	2 files
0109LM	5 files
0110LM	13 files
0111LM	410 files
0112LM	2 files
0114LM	2 files
0115LM	9 files
0116LM	15 files
0117LM	1 file
0158LM	1 files
0214LM	4 files
1139LM	1 file

Access conditions

Free access to records.

II) Operations Department of the East Region

The selection proposed represents just a tiny part of the archives of this department. The most noteworthy items are the records regarding the organisation of the East Region, instructions and service memos of the time, papers presented and talks given by various SNCF managers and a number of reports on operating accidents.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0157LM	1 file
0212LM	1 file
0213LM	6 files
0224LM	4 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

III) Noisy-le-Sec Rolling Stock area

Reference 0434LM contains the archives of the Personnel Secretariat for three main subjects:

- Career development
- Staff representation
- Social services

Reference number	Number of cartons for 1939-1945
0434LM	12 files
0414LM	159 files

Access conditions

Free access to records, except for those concerning staff and accidents, for which permission is required in compliance with the laws governing archives and the public domain. They may be released at the request of a staff member or his dependents. It is however possible to request exceptional permission to view such documents.

IV) Traction & Rolling Stock Establishment, Belfort

The Belfort establishment had the dual function of depot and maintenance shed. Up until 1945-1946 the depot function came under the Traction area in Vesoul and the maintenance shed function under the Nancy Rolling Stock area.

The archives for the wartime period in this case concern maintenance staff at Belfort:

- Depot history
- National defence (use of manpower in the enterprises)
- Mobilisation of staff
- Prisoners of war
- Secondment to the Deutsche Reichsbahn
- Requisition as part of Compulsory Work Service requirements
- Wartime recruitment conditions
- Staff wages and salaries
- Staff imprisoned or deported
- Disciplinary measures
- Passive defence
- Liberation of the Territoire de Belfort
- Aid granted to staff or the families of staff injured or killed in the war
- Returning employees and award of decorations.
- Social welfare

Reference number	Number of cartons for 1939-1945
0206LM	68 files

Access conditions

Free access to records.

V) Alsace Regional Division

Recurrent themes include:

- Demarcation of the border between France and Germany
- Military affairs
- A few statutory texts
- Private sidings

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0838LM	9 files
0899LM	33 files
0900LM	12 files
0906LM	4 files
0907LM	20 files

Records 0901LM and 0903LM consist of glass panels and photo albums with respect to the destruction of civil engineering structures.

Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
0901LM	17 files
0903LM	25 files and glass panels

Access conditions

Free access to records.

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RECORD SHEET 17

Regulations

The Centre for Historical Archives in Le Mans has a large number of statutory texts that may be placed at the disposal of readers. The wealth of information contained in these records is very useful in understanding the 1939-1945 period and the complex organisation of the company.

	Reference numbers	Number of files for 1939-1945
Agendas (OJ)	0067LM	1 file
Bylaws (OG)	0420LM	38 files
General instructions	0429LM	77 files
General memos	0430LM	44 files
General recommendations	0436LM	1 file
Service instructions	0446LM	5 files
Senior Management	0404LM	9 files
Operations	0405LM	18 files
Personnel	0401LM	3 files
Traction & Rolling Stock	0395LM	15 files
Track & Buildings	0407LM	5 files

RECORD SHEET 18

Documentary resources

The company has a vast number of other sources of information that may be consulted via the CAP'DOC application, a documentary research tool that may be accessed from the reading room at the Archive Centre in Le Mans.

There is an inventory that lists the documents available for consultation. There is also a CD-ROM that has been produced on the "History of the SNCF Technical Delegation in Vichy".

Last but not least, the documents under reference numbers 0393LM and 0487LM comprise directories of the Departments and Divisions within the company between 1939 and 1945.

Reference number	Number of files for 1939-1945
0393LM	20 files
0487LM	3 files
0441LM	4 files
0743LM	1 file
0852LM	1 file

Appendix 1: Resource categories

	Research material available		Analyses of archives via MAIS <u>only</u>
	<i>Focused on 1938-1948</i>	<i>Broader period</i>	
Record sheet 1 <i>Secretariat to the Board of Directors</i>	0041LM	0043LM, 0044LM, 0045LM, 505LM, 0619LM	
Record sheet 2 <i>Secretariat to the Corporate Executive</i>			0138LM, 0068LM, 0020LM
Record sheet 3 <i>Claims Department</i>	0390LM, 0412LM	0005LM, 0388LM,	
Record sheet 4 <i>Budget Department</i>	0179LM, 0187LM		
Record sheet 5 <i>Technical Administration Department</i>	0026LM	0238LM	
Record sheet 6 <i>Personnel Department</i>	0025LM, 0202LM, 0118LM, 0274LM		
Record sheet 7 <i>Finance Departments</i>		0325LM	0203LM, 0241LM, 0242LM, 0307LM
Record sheet 8 <i>Supplies, Orders and Contracts Department</i>	0438LM		
Record sheet 9 <i>Commercial Department</i>		0998LM	0204LM, 0252LM, 0751LM
Record sheet 10 <i>Main Fixed Installations Department</i>		0760LM	
Record sheet 11 <i>Main Traffic Department</i>		0662LM, 0756LM	0018LM, 0225LM
Record sheet 12 <i>North Region</i>	0279LM		0033LM, 0050LM, 0099LM, 0184LM, 0221LM, 0003LM
Record sheet 13 <i>South-West Region</i>	0073LM, 00243LM, 0303LM, 0084LM, 0086LM, 0643LM, 0407LM	0860LM, 0236LM, 0040LM	0037LM, 0039LM, 0047LM, 1318LM, 0269LM, 0397LM, V104963

	Research material available		Analyses of archives via MAIS <u>only</u>
	<i>Focused on 1938-1948</i>	<i>Broader period</i>	
Record sheet 14 <i>West Region</i>	0201LM, 0432LM		0489LM, 0780LM, V106883
Record sheet 15 <i>South-East Region</i>		0266LM, 0678LM	0028LM, 0052LM, 0296LM, 0297LM, 0300LM
Record sheet 16 <i>East Region</i>	0111LM, 0206LM, 0414LM	0214LM, 0434LM, 0903LM	0093LM, 0101LM, 0102LM, 0103LM, 0104LM, 0105LM, 0106LM, 0107LM, 0108LM, 0109LM, 0110LM, 0112LM, 0114LM, 0115LM, 0116LM, 0117LM, 0157LM, 0158LM, 0212LM, 0213LM, 0224LM, 0838LM, 0899LM, 0900LM, 0901LM, 0906LM, 0907LM, 1139LM
Record sheet 17 <i>Regulations</i>			0067LM, 0420LM, 0429LM, 0430LM, 0436LM, 0446LM, 0395LM, 0401LM, 0404LM, 0405LM, 0409LM
Record sheet 18 <i>Documentary Resources</i>			0393LM, 0441LM, 0487LM, 0743LM, 0852LM