How do I deviate from a European standard?

Due to the nature of an EN, there is no need to formally deviate from it. If you cannot comply with an EN that is ‘mandatory’ by being referenced in a mandatory document, you need to follow the procedure for deviating from the particular document that references the EN.

For example, you would apply to RSSB for a deviation from a RGS or the Department for Transport for a deviation from a TSI.

Further information

You can find more information on items mentioned in this briefing sheet:

- In other leaflets in this series on:
  - ‘Railway Group Standards’
  - ‘Deviations from Railway Group Standards’
  - ‘Technical Specifications for Interoperability for structural sub-systems’

These and other leaflets are available on the RSSB website.

- The RSSB website (www.rssb.co.uk)
- BSI, CEN and ETSI websites
  (www.bsigroup.co.uk; www.cen.eu; www.etsi.org).

Any feedback on this leaflet? Please let us know at: standardsleaflets@rssb.co.uk
Introduction

This leaflet provides information about European standards (ENs). These are standards produced by European standards organisations.

The leaflet may be of particular interest to:
• People who manage projects in the rail industry.
• Rail industry staff who use standards.
• Suppliers and manufacturers of rail industry parts, assets and vehicles.

What is a European standard?

ENs are documents that have been ratified by one of the three European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs):
• The European Committee for Standardisation (CEN).
• The European Committee for Electro-technical Standardisation (CENELEC).
• The European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI).

These three ESOs are recognised as competent in the area of voluntary technical standardisation in accordance with Regulation (EU) no 1025/2012 on European standardisation.

An EN carries with it the obligation to be implemented at national level by being given the status of a national standard and by withdrawal of any conflicting national standard. Therefore, an EN automatically becomes a national standard in each of the 33 CEN-CENELEC member countries.

ENs help in developing the single European market for goods and services in all sectors. The intention of ENs is to facilitate trade between countries, create new markets and cut compliance costs.

Compliance with ENs could be one or more of the following:
• Voluntary – where industry chooses to use the EN when it is useful to do so.
• Harmonised – where the EN is harmonised with a European Directive or a TSI, compliance with the EN gives a presumption of conformity with the Directive or the TSI.
• Mandatory – where the EN is referenced in the text of a document which must be complied with in specified circumstances, such as a TSI or a RGS, compliance with the EN becomes mandatory.

Harmonised European standards

The European Commission publishes in the EU Official Journal lists of ENs that are harmonised against particular Directives or TSIs.

Harmonised ENs relating to railway applications have one or more ‘Z Annexes’, which identify the legislation and essential requirements that are supported by the EN. If a harmonised EN supports more than one European Directive and TSI, there will be an ‘Annex Z…’ (ZA, ZB, ZC, etc.) for each Directive or TSI.

The essential requirements for rail interoperability include safety, reliability & availability, health, environmental protection and technical compatibility, along with others specific to certain sub systems.

In the UK, ENs are published by the British Standards Institute (BSI) which is the UK’s National Standards Organisation as BS ENs.

How does the GB rail industry influence the content of a European standard?

The BSI establishes Mirror Committees that follow the development of a particular EN. These committees provide a mechanism for GB input into the development of the EN, and for establishing a GB position when the EN is circulated for consultation and voted on for approval.

RSSB, on behalf of the BSI, provides the secretariat for those committees that mirror ENs relating to railway applications in both CEN and CENELEC.

Where can I find out if there is a European standard on the subject area that interests me?

You can access and purchase ENs from the BSI website.
You can also access the catalogues produced by the European standards organisations from their websites.