What documents support Railway Group Standards?

Other documents that support RGSs are produced for industry under the same arrangements in the RGS Code and Standards Manual. They are developed at the request of industry and are approved by standards committees. Their use is summarised below:

• Rail Industry Standards (RISs) – RISs associated with an RGS would be harmonised with the RGS and compliance with the RIS would be based on the same principles as those that apply to a harmonised European standard.

• Rail Industry Approved Codes of Practice (RACOPs) – these provide an industry approved method of meeting requirements in RGSs. If you choose not to use the recommended method, you are expected to assure yourself that the method you are following is as effective, and no less safe, than the method in the RACOP.

The effectiveness of each RACOP will be reviewed when the opportunity arises to determine its continued fitness for purpose. The RACOP could be replaced by a harmonised RIS or a Rail Industry Guidance Note.

• Rail Industry Guidance Notes (GNs) – these give guidance on the interpretation of requirements in RGSs.

RISs, RACOPs and GNs are published in the same way as RGSs.

Further information

You can find more information on items mentioned in this leaflet:

• The RGS Code and Standards Manual – through the RSSB website (www.rssb.co.uk or through the RGS Online website)

• RGSs – through the RGS Online website (www.rgsonline.co.uk)

• In other leaflets in the ‘Tell me about …’ series on:
  • Standards and the Rail Industry
  • The Rule Book
  • How to find Standards
  • Rail Industry Standards
  • NTRs and NSRs

These and other leaflets are available on the RSSB website.

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

This leaflet provides information about Railway Group Standards (RGSs). These are standards agreed and used by the mainline railway in Great Britain (GB). They must be complied with under specified circumstances.

The leaflet may be of particular interest to:
- People who manage projects or operations in the rail industry.
- Rail industry staff whose work involves the management of standards.
- Suppliers and manufacturers of rail industry parts, assets and vehicles.

What is a Railway Group Standard?

A RGS is a standard that defines what must be done to achieve technical compatibility on the GB mainline network. RGSs set out technical requirements applicable to vehicles and the infrastructure or processes applicable to transport operators.

The Rule Book is an RGS that deals with operational rules.

A ‘transport operator’ is either a railway undertaking or an infrastructure manager.

How are Railway Group Standards produced?

RGSs are produced in accordance with the arrangements approved by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) and set out in the RGS Code and the Standards Manual. The RGS Code and the Standards Manual also describe the industry procedures for changing RGSs and how to obtain a deviation from a RGS.

RGSs are industry’s standards, managed by industry. Standards committees have been established to make decisions on RGSs – such as the need for an RGS and the approval of its content. Because these are industry’s standards, standards committees are made up of industry representatives. Industry is consulted on all draft RGSs before they are approved and published.

Who must comply with Railway Group Standards?

The ORR currently mandates compliance with RGSs on infrastructure managers (including Network Rail) and on railway undertakings (passenger and freight) operating on the GB mainline network. The requirement to comply with RGSs is set out in the company’s licence to operate, as issued by the ORR.

RGSs set out National Technical Rules (NTRs) and National Safety Rules (NSRs) for the GB mainline railway. Compliance with NTRs and NSRs is required under the Railways (Interoperability) Regulations (RIR) 2011 and the Railways and other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations (ROGS) 2006 (as amended). As a consequence of this legislation, project entities must comply with NTRs.

A project entity is defined in RIR 2011 as ‘in relation to a project, a contracting entity or manufacturer or the authorised representative established in the EU of a contracting entity or manufacturer’.

Companies who have to comply with RGSs may need their contractors to comply also; this requirement may be put into practice through contractual arrangements with the contractors.

Where can I find the Railway Group Standard I need?

You can find RGSs on a website provided by RSSB: www.rgsonline.co.uk. This is the definitive source of RGSs. The website shows all live, withdrawn or superseded RGSs, amendments and clarifications for RGSs as well as supporting documents such as briefing notes.

A list of what is issued and withdrawn is available on the Latest Updates page of www.rgsonline.co.uk.

If you need hard copies of an RGS, you can order them directly from the printers (see the details on the RGS Online website).