How is the Rule Book managed?

The Rule Book is managed by industry with RSSB facilitating its maintenance, design and publication. The TOM SC approves the content of all modules and handbooks. Industry is consulted on all draft modules and handbooks before they are published.

Further details of the purpose and operations of standards committees can be found in the leaflet ‘Tell me about Industry Committees dealing with standards’.

Further information

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

- The RGS Online website (www.rgsonline.co.uk)
- The RSSB website (www.rssb.co.uk)
- In other leaflets in the ‘Tell me about …’ series:
  - Railway Group Standards
  - Deviations from Railway Group Standards

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

The leaflet may be of particular interest to:

- People in the rail industry who carry out operational duties and their managers, or
- People in the rail industry whose work involves the management of standards.

It may also be helpful to organisations who are involved in providing support (such as training) to the rail industry.

What is the Rule Book?

The Rule Book (GE/RT8000) is a mandatory standard, composed of a suite of modules and handbooks which contain direct instructions for railway staff. It sets out the operational rules for application on the GB mainline railway, and which are necessary to enable the safe and timely delivery of people and goods to their destination.

The Rule Book is one of three standards which make up the National Operations Publications. The others are GO/RM3053 Working Manual for Rail Staff: Handling and carriage of Dangerous Goods and GO/RM3056 Working Manual for Rail Staff: Freight Train Operations.

The scope of the Rule Book is aligned with nine ‘fundamental operating principles’. RSSB-GBMR-OC Operational Concept for the GB Mainline Railway provides a link between the fundamental operating principles and the Rule Book.

Why is the Rule Book mandatory?

The Rule Book is a Railway Group Standard (RGS). The requirement to comply with RGSs is set out in a company’s licence to operate, as issued by the Office of Rail Regulation.

The rules in the Rule Book are National Safety Rules (NSRs). The Railways and other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations (ROGS) 2006 (as amended) require infrastructure managers and railway undertakings to comply with NSRs through their Safety Management System (SMS).

Who must comply with the rules set out in the Rule Book?

Every person carrying out specified operational duties (for example, train drivers, signalers or persons in charge of a possession) on the GB mainline railway must comply with the rules set out in the Rule Book.

Can I apply for a deviation from the Rule Book?

The rules set out in the Rule Book are applicable everywhere on the GB mainline railway. However, in specific locations where your company finds it impracticable to comply with one or more of these rules, it can apply to do something differently by submitting an application for a deviation. Every application for a deviation is reviewed and, if appropriate, approved by the Traffic Operation and Management Standards Committee (TOM SC).

Where can I find the Rule Book modules and handbooks I need?

The Rule Book modules and handbooks are published in electronic format at RGS Online www.rgsonline.co.uk. This is the definitive source of modules and handbooks. All Rule Book content is treated as uncontrolled once printed.

If you need printed copies of a Rule Book module or handbook, you can order them directly from the printers (see the details on the RGS Online website).

How can I find amendments and updates to the Rule Book?

Amendments and updates to the Rule Book are set out in the following publications:

- The ‘Periodic Operating Notice’ (this is often referred to as the PON), published by Network Rail every 3 months and made available to railway undertakings.
- The ‘AM Amendment Module’ (GE/RT8000/AM), currently published by RSSB every 6 months.
- ‘Changes to National Operations Publications’ (GE/RT8001), published by RSSB every 3 months.