



Procedures for Alteration of Allocated International Paths

Appendix to the RNE Process Handbook for International Path Allocation for
Infrastructure Managers

Version 1.0

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Version history

VERSION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE	CHANGES
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1.0	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-12-04	Document approved by the RNE GA

1. Introduction and scope of this document

Based on the path agreements¹, applicants can expect that an allocated path is available up to its operation. However, in several cases, it may be necessary for infrastructure managers and allocation bodies (Hereafter IMs) to alternate, adjust, replace² or withdraw already allocated paths. This activity is the so-called “**Alteration of an Allocated Path**” (or short “Path Alteration”). However, the need for path alteration shall be reduced to a minimum. This subject has been tackled in the project “Redesign of the international timetabling process” (TTR).³

A path alteration may refer to one single running day, several days or all remaining days in a yearly timetable; It is also possible to alter the whole path section or just a part of it. It applies to paths in a yearly timetable and to those booked using the short-term planning process as well.

This handbook describes the process of a path alteration with an international impact. The process of path alteration without international impact and the path alteration of domestic traffic is out of the scope of the document. Information on the path alteration processes (both on alterations with international impact and alterations only affecting domestic traffic) are to be described in the Network Statement of each IM.

2. Reference documents

This handbook follows and is based on the principles set down in the

- Directive 2012/34/EU
- RNE Process Handbook for International Path Allocation
- TAP/TAF TSI Sector Handbook for the Communication between RUs/IMs v1.4
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 454/2011 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem ‘telematics applications for passenger services’ of the trans-European rail system (TAP TSI)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 1305/2014 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the telematics applications for freight subsystem of the rail system in the European Union and repealing the Regulation (EC) No 62/2006 (TAF TSI)
- RNE Guidelines for Coordination / Publication of Planned Temporary Capacity Restrictions for the European Railway Network Version 2.00 (“TCR Guidelines”)
- RNE Handbook for International Contingency Management Version 1.5

¹ Contracts concluded between the IM and applicants on the use of the infrastructure.

² The difference between path adjustment and path replacement is in the fact whether the first running day has already passed. The path cannot be replaced (only adjusted) if the train already ran at least once.

³ Among other things, TTR introduces timely planning of TCRs and commercial conditions motivating IMs to minimise the number of path alterations.

3. Reasons for triggering path alteration

The IMs shall reduce the need for path alteration to a minimum by timely respecting the process described in the TCR Guidelines and required by Annex VII to Directive 2012/34/EU. However, there are still some reasons why infrastructure managers may need to trigger the process of path alteration:

- Late TCR becomes known
- TCR caused by force majeure emerges
- Originally unexpected shift, shortening or prolongation of an already published TCR become necessary
- Exact timing of a TCR originally beyond the control of IMs becomes known
- To re-establish safe train operations
- To ensure the best possible matching of all path requests⁴
- Legal requirement to satisfy capacity requests of armed forces as a matter of priority⁵

4. Path request system

For best results, it is recommended that applicants use the Path Coordination System PCS (Internet-based communication system for the optimisation of international train path coordination) for initial requests already. Any path alteration can then be based on the complete information contained in PCS.

The PCS process is described in the “PCS Documentation” (<https://cms.rne.eu/pcs/pcs-documentation/process-path-alteration>).

5. Path Alteration Process Description

5.1 List of involved stakeholders

Stakeholder	Definition/explanation
Initiating IM	The IM triggering a path alteration with an international impact (see the explanation in sub-chapter 5.2).
Initiating pair	The initiating IM and the applicant holding the rights to the initially allocated path on the network of the initiating IM are together referred to as the initiating pair.
Affected IM	Infrastructure managers of the subsequent and preceding path sections, which are affected by the path alteration triggered by the initiating IM.
Leading IM	The active coordination role in the path alteration process is overtaken by the initiating IM. However, in PCS the leading IM (for the initial path request) remains in the dossier with the right to cancel the entire dossier.

⁴ Pursuant to point 6 of Annex VII to Directive 2012/34/EU, when IMs decide on late path requests, this case requires approval by the applicant to which the path had been allocated.

⁵ Applicable in Germany and France.

5.2 Triggering Path Alteration

The applicant holding the rights to the initially allocated path shall be informed immediately when the IM intends to trigger the path alteration process or when the IM gets into the possession of information on which basis it can be presumed that triggering the path alteration is highly probable.

Firstly, the IM has to evaluate if the path alteration process will have an international impact. The following definition shall be used for evaluation:

An international impact as the result of the path alteration process shall be expected if the agreed running days, border times, path number and or parameters affecting the timetable might be changed. An international impact shall also be expected in a case where the alternative would affect the operational concept to the extent that the applicant will have to request a path modification in one of the subsequent networks (i.e. additional operational stop).⁶

A path alteration with no international impact follows the national procedures. However, if circumstances change or the IM gets into the possession of information on which basis an international impact can be expected, the IM has to follow the process described in this document. The IM triggering path alteration always has to analyse a possibility to provide an immediate economically viable alternative that causes no international impact.

The IM triggering path alteration becomes the initiating IM, The initiating IM always has the right to withdraw the alteration request.

In addition to the applicant holding the rights to the initially allocated path, the initiating IM informs about the start of the process all potentially involved stakeholders, (e.g. infrastructure managers of the subsequent path sections, but also IMs of preceding path sections if they might be potentially affected).⁷ The involved IMs are referred to as affected IMs.

5.3 Coordination and Construction of an Alternative Path

It is up to infrastructure managers to analyse and propose path alternatives. The initiating IM and the affected IMs always have to take into account as far as possible the initial path request, the commercial and operational constraints of the applicants and the risks of transport being shifted to less environmentally friendly modes of transport.

The IMs should agree in advance when every affected IM will finish the construction process. In the process of determination of the time frame, it has to be ensured that all affected IMs have sufficient time to construct their train path section; the coordination is ensured by the initiating IM.

The initiating IM should be by default the first IM to provide an alternative path. The next IM to provide an alternative path is the affected IM responsible for the subsequent path section and or the IM responsible for the preceding path section in case it is affected, and so forth towards.⁸ The IMs in the process of construction also need to take into account infrastructure availability and check it with their partners. The necessary alternative should be provided by all affected IMs.

⁶ It should be taken into consideration that the initiating IM has only limited information on the applicants' operational concept. The applicants have possibility to express their opinion within the acceptance phase.

⁷ For instance, if it is highly probable that no alternative will be available, which might result in the whole international path cancellation/withdrawal.

⁸ The affected IMs, coordinated by the initiating IM, might deviate from the defined order in case it increases efficiency and suits better a particular path alteration.

In order to increase efficiency, an IM might agree with the IM responsible for the subsequent path section on the timetable times at the infrastructure border without filling in the details of the path. The detailed path is provided by the IMs later; this enables earlier involvement of the affected IMs into the construction of an alternative path.

Each IM has to inform immediately the applicants and all other IMs as soon as it becomes aware that there is no economically viable alternative.⁹

5.4 Path offer

Once the initiating IM and all affected IMs have provided a harmonised alternative,¹⁰ the initiating IM is in charge of sending the consistent offer – with remarks if necessary.

5.5 Path acceptance/allocation

If all involved applicants agree with the alternative path offer, the applicant holding the rights to the formerly initially allocated path on the network of the initiating IM sends a formal acceptance notification. IMs have to adjust the path agreements accordingly.¹¹

If any of the applicants disagree with the alternative, it has the right to reject the path alteration offer and ask for adaptation; any corresponding remark will be treated as far as possible in the second offer. In case the originally allocated path is not available any more and the applicant rejects also the second offer, it is up to each affected IM to decide, whether they withdraw the running days of the path or leave the remaining path section to the particular applicants. This process is described in the Network Statement of each IM.

The applicants' acceptance should be sent within 5 working days of receipt of the path offer. If no response is sent by the applicants the IMs withdraw the concerned running day.

5.6 Limited capacity on infrastructure

In some cases, the remaining capacity of the route and the alternatives is not sufficient to provide all applicants holding the rights to the originally allocated paths with economically usable alternatives. Priority rules in a fair and non-discriminatory manner shall be applied. The applicable priority rules are defined in RNE Handbook for International Contingency Management and Network Statements of each IM.

6. Transitional period

The Procedures for Alteration of International Path Request Management Guidelines become effective immediately by the approval of the RNE General Assembly. IMs and ABs should adapt their internal processes and the Network Statement for timetable 2022. The Path Coordination System PCS should be used for the alteration process as soon as the bidirectional interface between PCS and national IT systems is in production.

⁹ This approach should prevent redundant work on IMs' side, but also gives more time to the applicants to place a new request.

¹⁰ Path alteration in PCS: Initiating IM has to set up light on green. If there are other IMs affected, they have to set up their lights on green too. If all IM lights on green, initiating IM has to submit the path alteration offer.

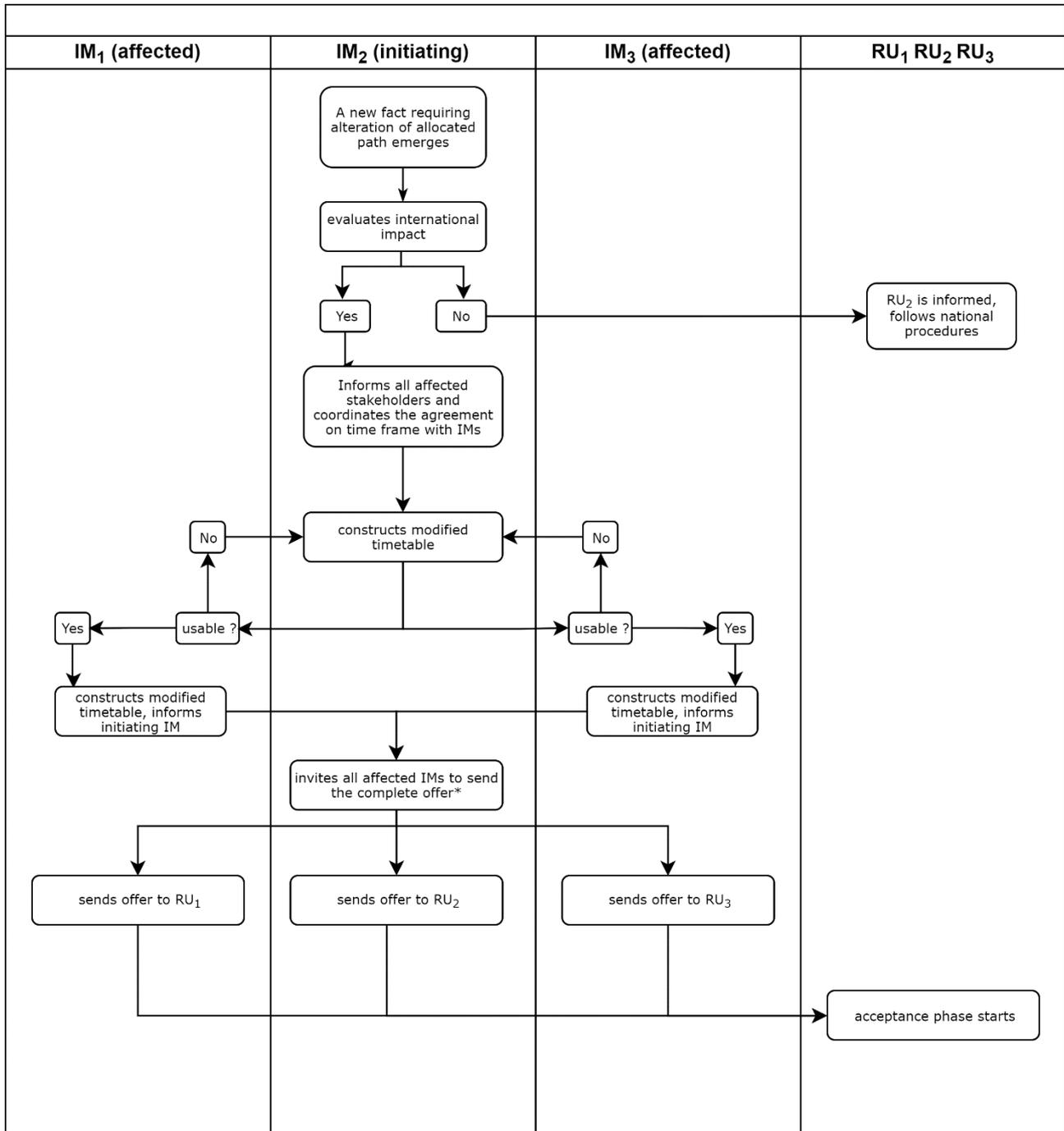
¹¹ A formal path allocation is a legal act. For the time being, this remains a national process and contracts are delivered IM by IM.

Each Infrastructure Manager/Allocation Body has set up specific contact points (One-Stop-Shop, or OSS) to ensure efficient handling of the international path requests.

Contact details: <http://www.rne.eu/organisation/oss-c-oss/>

Annex A – Diagram complementing sub-chapters 5.2 and 5.3

The process diagram below displays a situation when a train runs over three networks in order IM1, IM2 and IM3. In each network a different RU has been granted the right to use the path concerned. RU1 is the owner in network of IM1 and so forth. A path alteration is triggered by IM2, which is responsible for the network in the middle of the international path.



*) The process step is not necessary if the bidirectional interface between PCS and the national IT systems is in production