Procedures for Alteration of Allocated Paths

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

Version 2.0

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Content

This document is intended as a handbook for the implementation of the Procedures for Alteration of Allocated Paths as described by RNE. As neither legislation nor IT-systems are currently adapted to enable all the elements of TTR, individual TTR elements can only be implemented by the infrastructure managers to a limited extent for the upcoming timetable periods, starting in December 2024. If and when the legislation and IT-systems fully enable the implementation of all the elements of TTR, the different RNE handbooks on those elements should be applied to the process.

Version history

VERSION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE	CHANGES
0.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-01-28	Document created by Sebastián Čarek
0.2	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-02-05	Inclusion of remarks from the S&TT HLG
0.2.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-03-19	Inputs from the S&TT WG Group members collected
0.3	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-04-02	Document revised by the S&TT WG, inputs accepted/rejected, open points postponed to the next meeting
0.3.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-09-01	Draft for the S&TT WG, new remarks and survey results prepared for decision-making
0.3.2	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-10-14	Draft complemented with the legal check
0.4	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-10-16	Revised document finalised by the S&TT WG
1.0	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-12-04	Document approved by the RNE GA
1.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2021-02-08	New revision based on the results of the TCRs in TT project, TTR developments and other collected business needs
1.2	Sebastián Čarek Capacity Manager	2021-03-01	Inclusion of remarks from the S&TT WG
1.3	Sebastián Čarek Capacity Manager	2021-03-09	Inclusion of remarks from the S&TT WG
1.4	Sebastián Čarek Capacity Manager	2021-04-15	Adjustments in the S&CM HLG
1.5	Sebastián Čarek Capacity Manager	2021-04-22	Adjustments following the S&CM HLG´s opinion gathering
1.6	Zsolt Ungvári Capacity Manager	2021-10-13	Adjustments following the revision of the document by the Legal Matters WG and inclusion of remarks from the S&TT WG
1.7	Zsolt Ungvári Capacity Manager	2021-10-27	Adjustments following the revision of the document by the Legal Matters WG
2.0	RNE General Assembly	2021-12-07	Version 1.7 approved by the RNE General Assembly on 7 December 2021

1. Introduction and scope of this document

Based on the contracts of use of the infrastructure/path agreements, 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, replace[1] 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 "Timetable and Capacity Redesign" (TTR).[2]

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.

Information on the path alteration processes (both on alterations with multi-network impact and alterations only affecting domestic traffic) are to be described in the Network Statement of each IM. IMs are obliged to implement these procedures according to chapter "Transitional period" and by this promote internationally harmonised timetabling processes over the single European railway area.

2. Reference documents

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

- Directive 2012/34/EU
- Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2017/2075 of 4 September 2017 replacing Annex VII to Directive 2012/34/EU)
- RNE Process Handbook for International Path Allocation
- TAP/TAF TSI Sector Handbook for the Communication between RUs/IMs v2.1
- 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 3.00 ("TCR Guidelines")
- RNE Handbook for International Contingency Management Version 1.5
- Description of the Timetabling and Capacity Redesign Process 2.00
- Handling Temporary Capacity Restrictions in Timetabling – Process Version 1.0

[1] 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.
[2] 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
- Exact details of a minor impact 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 requests (for this special case, see chapter 7)[3]
- Legal requirement to satisfy capacity requests of armed forces as a matter of priority[4]

It should be noted that in the event of disturbance to train movements caused by technical failure or accident in accordance with article 54 of Directive 2012/34/EU the infrastructure manager shall take all necessary steps to restore the situation to normal.

4. Path request system

For best results, it is recommended that if applicants use the Path Coordination System PCS (Internet-based communication system for the optimisation of international train path coordination) for initial requests already, the PCS is used also for the path alteration process.

The PCS process is described in the “PCS Documentation” (https://cms.rne.eu/node/30476/phases-path-alteration).

5. Path Alteration Process Description

5.1 List of involved stakeholders

Stakeholder	Definition/explanation
Initiating IM	The IM triggering a path alteration, which is in charge of the process coordination.
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 once it reaches back the active timetable phase.

[3] For instance 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.
[4] 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 a multi-network impact. The following definition shall be used for evaluation:

> *A multi-network impact as the result of the path alteration process shall be expected if the agreed running days, border times, path number, OTN and or parameters affecting the timetable might be changed. A multi-network 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).*[5]

The IM triggering path alteration always has to analyse a possibility to provide an immediate economically viable alternative that causes no multi-network 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).[6] 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.[7] 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.

In order to increase efficiency, any 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.

[5] 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.
[6] For instance, if is highly probable that no alternative will be available, which might result in the whole international path cancellation/withdrawal.
[7] 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.

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.[8]

5.4 Path offer

Once the initiating IM and all affected IMs have provided a harmonised alternative,[9] the initiating IM is in charge of sending the consistent offer – with remarks if necessary.

5.5 Path acceptance/allocation

If all affected 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 and/or adjust the allocated path in the IT system.[10]

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 any of the applicants rejects the offer, it is recommended to withdraw the unharmonised running days of the path; however, IMs can also leave the remaining national path section to the particular applicants and / or shorten the allocated path until the reasonable infrastructure point. This process is described in the Network Statement of each IM.

The applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but:

- at the latest within **7 calendar days**, in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs **more than 30 days** prior to the train departure,
- at the latest within **24 hours**,[11] in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs **less than 30 days** prior to the train departure. The IMs can also set up the latest deadline, which should be 12 hours prior to the train departure.[12]

If no response is sent by the applicants in the timeframe indicated above, the IMs withdraw the concerned running day and utilise the capacity for different purposes (applicants).[13]

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. Allocation rules in a fair and non-discriminatory manner shall be applied. The applicable allocation rules are defined in RNE Handbook for International Contingency Management and Network Statements of each IM.

[8] This approach should prevent redundant work on IMs´ side, but also gives more time to the applicants to place a new request.
[9] 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 as well. If all IM lights are on green, initiating IM has to submit the path alteration offer.
[10] A formal path allocation is a legal act. For the time being, this remains a national process and contracts are delivered IM by IM.
[11] Excluding Saturdays and Sundays.
[12] In case the path alternative is submitted by IMs less than 12 hours prior to the train departure, the acceptance phase will be agreed between IMs and applicants on the case by case basis.
[13] Afterwards the applicants still have possiblity to apply for the capacity on the concerned day using the ad hoc process, nevertherless, with lost priority to other alterated paths and ad hoc requests placed earlier.

6. Timelines for path alteration

In order to be able to fulfil the provisions set by point 12 of Annex VII of Directive 2012/34/EU the following timelines[14] for the path alteration process should be applied for minor impact TCRs, late TCRs and changes in known TCRs known 135 days before the beginning of the capacity restriction. In cases the IMs need to re-establish safe train operation and or a contingency appears, the IMs might apply shorter timeframes. Furthermore, in a national path alteration, IMs and ABs can agree with the affected applicants on a shorter timeline than defined in 6.1 and 6.2.

6.1 Timeline for alteration of passenger trains

Deadline	Action
T-135 days	The last day for IMs to trigger the path alteration in relation to the upcoming TCR
T-120 days	IMs provide internationally harmonised alternative offers
T-113 days	The last day for applicants to accept/reject offers or ask for adaptation[15]
T-106 days	The last day for IMs to allocate accepted offers or provide harmonised second offers

6.2 Timeline for alteration of freight trains

Deadline	Action
T-45 days	The last day for IMs to trigger the path alteration in relation to the upcoming TCR
T-30 days	IMs provide internationally harmonised alternative offers
T-23 days	The last day for applicants to accept/reject offers or ask for adaptation[16]
T-16 days	The last day for IMs to allocate accepted offers or provide harmonised second offers

The IMs can start the path alteration for freight trains earlier as the longer delay in the freight alteration reduces flexibility in alternatives. The timeline in 6.1 and 6.2 is the framework only for the latest deadlines.

7. Path optimisation process

The path optimisation process is a special case of the path alteration. Compared to the standard path alteration process, in the path optimisation process, the original path is still available for the train operation and active for the applicants holding the rights to this allocated path. The IMs trigger the path optimisation process to ensure the best possible matching of all path requests and or to increase the line capacity by timetable optimisation.[17]

[14] T- #: a deadline referring to the first day of of the capacity restriction (T) and the number of days (#) in advance of this deadline.
[15] The acceptance timeline follows chapter 5.5.
[16] The acceptance timeline follows chapter 5.5.
[17] Use cases and the approach for the optimisation due to conflicting new a rolling planning request and already allocated rolling planning paths is described in 2.4 of the annexe “Allocation Guidelines for Conflicting Capacity Announcements and Requests” to “Description of the Redesigned Timetabling Process v1.01”.

The IM triggering path optimisation process also becomes the initiating IM. The initiating IM always has the right to withdraw the path optimisation request. The initiating IM informs about the start of the path optimisation process of all affected IMs and applicants (if there are no affected IMs, then only affected applicants). The communication has to include the information that the process is driven by the optimisation and not by the fact that the original path is not available anymore.

Any path optimisation attempt with a multi-network impact is subject to confirmation of affected IMs before it is submitted as an alternative path offer.

The applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but:

- in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs more than **30 days** prior to the train departure, the applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but at the latest within **7 calendar days**,
- in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs less than **30 days** the applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but at the latest within **24 hours**,[18]
- if no response is provided by the applicants in time, the alternative path offer is considered as rejected and the original path remains active and allocated.

If the path alternative was accepted by the applicants than the IMs shall make the below steps:

- in case the path alternative is submitted by the IMs more than **30 days** prior to the train departure and the applicants accepted it within 7 calendar days, the IM shall cancel the optimised old path/optimised part of the old path within **7 calendar days**,
- in case the path alternative is submitted by the IMs less than **30 days** prior to the train departure and the applicants accepted it within **24 hours**, the IM shall cancel the optimised old path/optimised part of the old path within **24 hours**.

In case the applicant submits a major modification request (please see Annex B of Procedures for Modification of Allocated International Paths) for the path, which is already part of the Path Optimisation process, then the IMs stop the optimisation process and notify the other involved stakeholders.

8. Transitional period

The explanations in this document are based on the assumption that the legal framework, IT systems/tools at European level as well as at national level can be used to support various TTR elements. Therefore, individual TTR elements would only be implemented to a limited extent for the upcoming timetable periods, starting at December 2024. The exact details for the transitional period will be elaborated in the Basic Requirements which would be subject of RNE GA approval in May 2022.

Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Bodies should adapt their internal processes and the Network Statement in line with the Procedures for Alteration of Allocated Paths from X-5.25, where X denotes the first timetable referring to the complete roll out of TTR.

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/

[18] Excluding Saturdays and Sundays.

Annex A – Diagram complementing chapter 5

The process diagram below complements the document and 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 diagram does not include any TCR consultation, which might be also part of the communication between IMs and RUs.