FINAL - AGREED

5th RDG PR18 system operation working group

Note of meeting held on 18 August 2016 at RDG's offices

Attendees: Garry White, Chair (Network Rail), Bill Davidson (RDG), Lindsay Durham (Freightliner), Oliver Mulvey (DfT), Richard McClean (Arriva) (by phone), Chantal Pagram (Go Ahead), Steve Price (ATOC), Siobhán Carty (ORR), Raminta Brazinskaite (ORR – note taker)

Apologies/not present: Martin Baynham-Knight (Keolis), Graeme Hampshire (SWT), Jonathan Pugh (Network Rail), Nigel Jones (DBS), Tom Norris / Joanna Walker / Julie Pummell (Abellio), Dean Johnson (National Task Force), Fiona Dolman (Network Rail), Matthew Lutz (Network Rail), Guy Woodroffe (RSSB)

Introduction

1. This note summarises the main points of discussion at the meeting. It is not intended to represent the position of RDG or other attendees of the working group. Its purpose is to record key points to inform ORR's policy development and to provide transparency to interested stakeholders not present at the meeting.

2. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the revised draft of RDG's response to ORR's system operation working papers (working papers 2 and 3).

General points and actions from the last meeting

3. The group was updated on PR18 RDG working groups and their progress to date. These working groups are being supported by a PR18 coordination group, which brings together the leads from the four working groups, to enable information sharing and consistency of views, e.g. across RDG's response to different working papers.

4. It was also noted that the group on 'new ways to treat enhancements' had not yet met to discuss its response to ORR's working paper 5, owing to the fact that this paper has only recently been published. The group's meetings will be planned shortly.

Main points of discussion

5. The group made the following comments on the revised draft of RDG's response to system operation working papers and the messages it has to communicate:

    a. The key messages that the response aims to stress are that the system operator needs a high-level framework in which its functions

are regulated; and that the framework needs to be flexible to allow it to incorporate or adapt to any future changes, i.e. there are going to be significant changes in CP6 that might take time to fully embed and that might have further implications on the system operator functions;

b. The system operator has to have a separate budget that is linked to what it has to deliver, e.g. outputs;

c. It has to be recognised that Network Rail is a single entity. This means that, when needed, it should be allowed to move its funds across different budgets. However, this needs to be justified, i.e. it has to be assessed to understand implications and trade-offs in terms of different outputs that Network Rail has to deliver;

d. Having a separate charging mechanism for the system operator would not be desirable at this stage;

e. The system operator should be in charge of wider research to help optimise network capacity, i.e. beyond research that is designed to address immediate requests;

f. The system operator should also be in charge of exploring opportunities to unlock capacity through non-infrastructure based means, i.e. re-timetabling. This should be done first to help avoid some expensive enhancement schemes;

g. In addition to this, system operator could coordinate various proposed changes across the network;

h. Customer satisfaction should play an important role to help assess the performance of the system operator. The customers of the system operator include both routes and train operators;

i. We need some KPIs to reflect end-user impacts. TOCs and FOCs should act as a good proxy to represent the end-user perspective, i.e. they should know what their customers want from the network;

j. There are a lot of detailed issues that need to be addressed. For example, the process for bidding freight paths needs to be improved, i.e. current timescales do not support the process; or Network Rail could be more proactive and offer some paths to operators;

k. There should be a process to feed information about various issues to ensure that customers get a good service, e.g. this could be done through the customer satisfaction process;

l. The dashboard should aim to communicate how well the overall system is performing; meanwhile scorecards should be related to the system operator performance only;

m. Industry needs better information provision. This could be part of the system operator role; and

n. The system operator also needs to ensure customer service consistency across its routes, i.e. for very short term capacity planning process.

6. The group had some specific comments/edits on the drafting of the response note. These had been taken separately. They will be incorporated into a final version of RDG's response.

RDG response

7. The group discussed the process for formally approving the RDG response, before it is submitted to ORR.