



OFFICE OF RAIL REGULATION

Office Of Rail Regulation

Introducing the ORR equality schemes

December 2006

Introduction by Bill Emery, Chief Executive

ORR's work ultimately impacts on all users of the passenger and freight railways as well as those who work on the railways. Therefore it is important that as an organisation we are able to involve people from all walks of life in the decisions we make.

I am committed to promoting equality and diversity practices throughout our organisation. This will help us consider the priorities of all sections of society in everything we do. We need to consider the impact of our decisions on others but also bring to bear the talents of our diverse workforce making ORR a better place for all of us to work.

We are required as a public body to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality. Our aim is to place equality of opportunity at the centre of public policy and employment practices. We already support this by committing to the principles of focused and effective regulation. But there is more that we can do.

We have provided here an overview of our role and how we interact with other organisations and interested parties in order to take forward our objectives. We have separate race and disability schemes setting out how we meet our duties in terms of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity when delivering our objectives. The schemes also set out our plans for implementing improvements to our processes and practices.

We are committed to reviewing these schemes so that they remain current and fit for purpose. We are also committed to ensuring they are implemented and that all identified actions are taken promptly.

The Office of Rail Regulation

The role of ORR

The Office of Rail Regulation is the combined health and safety and economic regulator for Britain's national rail network – as well as being the health and safety regulator for London Underground, trams, metros and heritage railways.

Our key roles are:

- to ensure that Network Rail, the owner and operator of the national railway infrastructure - the track and signalling - manages the network efficiently and in a way that meets the needs of its users;
- to encourage continuous improvement in health and safety performance;
- to secure compliance with relevant health and safety law, including taking enforcement action as necessary;
- to develop policy and enhance relevant railway health and safety legislation; and
- to license operators of railway assets, setting the terms for access by operators to the network and other railway facilities, and enforcing competition law in the rail sector.

ORR's aim and objectives

Our aim is to apply independent, fair and effective regulation to enable the railway to be safe, well maintained and efficient and to ensure that it provides value for money for users and for its funders.

Our objectives are:

- to maintain and develop effective health and safety regulation of the railway following the transfer of responsibility from HSC/E to us;
- to monitor Network Rail's performance in the delivery of a safe, sustainable and efficient network with improving performance and to intervene where required taking enforcement action which is focused, timely, proportionate and effective;
- to provide, through the effective discharge of our licence functions, an efficient and flexible mechanism to protect the interests of railway users by ensuring that appropriate common industry agreements and standards are entered into and maintained;
- to carry out a periodic review of Network Rail's track access charges, reaching a determination which achieves an optimal and fair outcome from a whole industry perspective, ensuring that Network Rail receives the right financial incentives for it to deliver on its obligations to customers and funders;



- to facilitate industry relationships through the effective use of incentives, markets and contracts and to align the delivery of rail services with the public interest through rail operators and Network Rail working in partnership;
- to exercise our competition powers so that rail users benefit from competition in the rail industry and rail markets work effectively;
- to inform and influence the effective development and application of EU rail policy;
- to engage with the Government, Network Rail and other stakeholders to support effective franchising through the alignment of Network Rail's development of Route Utilisation Strategies (RUSs), the Government's future franchising programme and the consideration of track access agreements; and
- to provide effective governance and corporate support services enabling ORR to achieve its objectives.

More details on our role, aims and objectives can be found on our website: www.rail-reg.gov.uk

Contact with external bodies

While our work may be of a specific safety, economic and contractual regulatory nature, it is often done in partnership and consultation with external stakeholders. Our work is ultimately for the benefit of all passengers and freight railway customers across the country, and therefore involves considerable consultation with interested parties and is carried out in the public interest. Among those parties, the most frequent contact is with the following:

- Network Rail;
- the franchised passenger train operating companies (TOCs) and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), freight operating companies and the rolling stock companies (ROSCOs);
- infrastructure maintenance and renewal companies and subcontractors;
- the Department for Transport, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, other regulators and other government departments;
- railway users, through Passenger Focus and the Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs); and
- journalists and interested stakeholders across the industry as well as outside the industry.

Relations are maintained with these bodies in a number of ways, including high-level meetings, consultation exercises and day-to-day contact among colleagues.

Railway users and passenger bodies

Enquiries from the public are regularly received by the office, and are coordinated by the central customer correspondence team (CCT). As a public body regulating a strategically important industry in Britain, we must also examine the material we release into the public domain. We regularly publish documents and reports; while many of these have a predominantly specific regulatory content, they are made available publicly in electronic form on our website, or through our library. Details of the information we make available publicly is set out in our publication scheme.

ORR Human Resources

Aside from dealings with external stakeholders and carrying out statutory functions with regard to statutory duties, the other major area where we have regard to racial and disability equality is in our relations with present, previous and potential employees.

We ensure that all those who work at ORR, have worked at ORR, or are potential employees of ORR are treated fairly and are free from discrimination and harassment. Behaviour contrary to these principles will be dealt with accordingly.

Equality duties

Our [Race Equality Scheme](#) and [Disability Equality Scheme](#) outline the measures we currently have in place to promote equality and diversity practices in the organisation. The schemes also identify areas where we need to introduce new measures or make improvements in order to meet our responsibilities. The race equality scheme developed in 2003 and reviewed in September 2006. The disability equality scheme was developed and implemented in December 2006.

We intend to develop a gender equality scheme in early 2007 for implementing in April 2007.

