
Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme **BRIEFING NOTE**

Subject: **New Suppliers**

Advice to: Railway Industry Supplier Approval Bodies (RISAB's)

Reference: Standard: RISAS/003 Issue: 3

Applies when: A supplier without experience of supplying goods or services **(covered by the RISAS product group structure)** into the Rail Industry requests a formal RISAS assessment.

Note's Purpose: To provide clarification on RISAS approval of new suppliers. One of the key elements in a RISAS assessment is a review of activity associated with the product or service currently being produced. A new supplier to the Rail Industry will not have any suitable production to be assessed. However, RISAS should not be a barrier to entry. This briefing note gives guidance on how a new supplier may approach RISAS assessment and become a mature part of the rail supply base. It should be read in conjunction with RISAS standard RISAS/003/001.

Background: RISAS was developed by the Rail Industry following recommendation 24 made in the Cullen report. Primarily RISAS was designed to improve supplier assurance in the existing supply base. It must not become a barrier to new suppliers wishing to supply goods and services into the Rail Industry. The process detailed below explains how a new supplier may develop in their knowledge and understanding of the rail industry supply requirements, become RISAS approved and mature in their understanding of rail industry requirements.

1 Requirements

1.1 The RISAB shall ensure that the requirements of this Briefing Note (BN) are applied in the assessment of a new supplier who does not yet have suitable products or services being delivered into the Rail Industry.

2 Initial Development

2.1 Any potential new supplier, who wishes to be approved under RISAS, must work with and be sponsored by an existing customer in the Rail Industry, including, for example, a FOC, a TOC or a spares manager.

2.2 The customer will be interested in developing the supplier to be an additional resource for the rail industry and will provide guidance and technical support for the work to be undertaken and any amendments needed to the supplier's processes and procedures **(this should include knowledge of RISAS scheme. If customer is already RISAS-approved, then this becomes easier)**. During this supplier development phase, as RISAS certification is required, a RISAB should

be appointed by the supplier. It may well be beneficial for the RISAB to be aware of any developmental work that the supplier is doing, either on management processes or shop floor practice, although the RISAB should be careful not to compromise its independence and impartiality, by being too involved, prior to any formal assessment. At this stage, there is likely to be no rail work involved, although the supplier is likely to be carrying out similar work on components from a different environment.

3. Initial Assessment

- 3.1 A RISAS assessment in this process would look at the supplier's systems and procedures, how it carries out the work associated with the components it is overhauling or the services it aims to provide and how it intends to modify its operation, including the management and implementation of these modifications, to support the work on rail products, including understanding and mitigating the associated risks.
- 3.2 Once the RISAB has assessed that the processes are suitable for the rail industry and that the change process will be managed effectively, it may issue a certificate, which is likely to include a number of limitations. The complete list of limitations will depend on the actual circumstances, but, given that the start of the process is co-operation between a supplier and an existing rail customer, it may be that one limitation is for the certificate to be valid only for a contract between these two parties, with suitable surveillance from the customer, so that the RISAB can carry out a further detailed assessment when that contract has bedded in. There is likely to be appreciable on-going dialogue between the supplier and its RISAB as the supplier starts to mature, this level reducing as the RISAB gains confidence.

4 Further Assessment

- 4.1 As the supplier matures in its knowledge of the rail industry and of the types of contract and work on offer, the limitations on certificates may be amended. The supplier can, in time, become a mature part of the supply base.

5 Definitions

- 5.1 The main definition of terms used in RISAS is contained in RISAS/001, Principles of RISAS.

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