



Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme **BRIEFING NOTE**

Subject: COVID -19 PANDEMIC - TEMPORARY MEASURES FOR RISAS CERTIFICATION

Advice to: Railway Industry Supplier Approval Bodies (RISABs)

Reference: Standard: RISAS/003 Issue: 5

Applies when: When COVID-19 emergency measures are temporarily preventing Railway Industry Supplier Approval Bodies (RISAB's) from carrying out planned assessments, visits, inspections, audits or any other on-site activity necessary to issue or confirm the efficacy of a RISAS certificate.

Note's Purpose: To provide clarification and guidance on measures to be adopted for RISAS Certification during emergency measures imposed to fight the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Background: The emergency measures adopted in different countries to fight the COVID-19 outbreak, which often include severe travel restrictions, shutdowns of manufacturing facilities and teleworking of the concerned staff, are creating difficulties for some parties involved in the RISAS Certification process.

RISAB's who cannot perform the evaluations, audits, visits and inspections as planned, affecting the issue or confirmation of the efficacy of RISAS certificates.

In view of the exceptional situation created by the COVID-19 outbreak, it has been decided to adopt the following temporary measures.

1 Requirements

- 1.1 When COVID-19 emergency measures are temporarily preventing RISAB's from carrying out planned assessments, visits, inspections, audits or any other on-site activity necessary to issue or confirm the efficacy of a RISAS certificate, RISAB's should, when performing their tasks, particularly those activities requiring visits to manufacturers' premises, continue carrying out their tasks to the extent that is possible in respect of the different and varying confinement measures taken at individual country level. In doing so RISAB's shall consider IAF MD 4:2018, issued by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), which gives details on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for auditing/assessment purposes and Informative Document IAF ID 3:2011 which provides information on the different steps which could be followed regarding the management of extraordinary events or circumstances. IAF MD 4 and IAF ID 3 are available at <https://www.iaf.nu/upFiles/IAF%20MD4%20Issue%202%2003072018.pdf> https://www.iaf.nu/upFiles/IAFID32011_Management_of_Extraordinary_Events_or_Circumstances.pdf



2 Existing RISAS Certification

- 2.1 For existing RISAS Certified Suppliers, RISAB's can decide to postpone assessment activity and where necessary issue an 'extension' to the certificate for a limited period of time (not normally exceeding 4 months beyond the expiry date of the certificate, or planned visit), providing that the certified arrangements are considered to be sufficiently 'stable' to ensure that the products and services which they supply during this period, conform to RISAS requirements.

Postponement of assessment activity and where necessary 'extension' to certificates shall be under the strict condition that the RISAB produce evidence, supporting its confidence about the effectiveness of the suppliers certified arrangements, to ensure that the products and services supplied, conform to RISAS requirements during this period, explaining the Alternative methods used and the results of the assessments it has undertaken.

Where applicable RISAB's shall publish a new version of the certificate with extended time validity stating the basis on which it has been issued, along with the accompanying letter, report, file etc. supporting the certification granted.

3. 'New' RISAS Certification

- 3.1 For 'new' RISAS Certification the RISAB can decide to perform the assessment by means of alternative methods, where possible, utilising the guidance contained in 1.1 above.

The RISAB shall identify and document the impact of the use of alternative methods on the assessment activities, in particular the validity, representativeness and objectivity of the assessments performed remotely.

The outcome of the assessment activities shall indicate the extent to which the alternative methods have been used and their effectiveness in achieving the assessment objectives.

The RISAB shall produce evidence, supporting its confidence that the arrangements that the supplier has put in place are sufficient to ensure that the products and services which they supply, will conform to RISAS requirements.

RISAS/003 Issue 5, Supplier Assessment Module specifies at sections:

3.2.1 The assessment shall identify the management systems in place and review their application to the physical production of selected products representative of the scope of approval being sought. This shall include the effectiveness of procedures / processes in place (which may be determined through analysis of the applicable outputs of internal auditing, management review, policy / objectives, performance monitoring, etc).

3.2.2 The assessment shall confirm that the critical products reviewed during the assessment are representative of the capability of the supplier. This is particularly relevant for a first assessment of a supplier under RISAS.

3.2.3 The RISAB assessment team shall ensure that the assessment covers all critical stages of the production and delivery of selected products (as identified during planning) against the selected contract(s) and applicable specifications, as



referenced in the detailed assessment plan. This shall include the assessment of actual work in progress (especially key activities critical to product safety) against the relevant contract.

The 'on-site' element of the assessment of physical production, of selected 'products', by RISAS Technical Experts and Assessors, is crucial to the 'assurance' of critical products and services which RISAS provides and therefore, in the absence of the RISAB being able to suitably and sufficiently replicate this using alternative measures, the RISAB 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 could include e.g. First Article Inspection, Destructive and Non-Destructive Testing, sponsorship between a supplier and an existing or prospective rail customer, limitation is for the certificate to be valid only for a contract between these two parties, with suitable surveillance from the customer, etc.

RISAB's shall act responsibly and assess and balance the risk when providing services in a more flexible manner. In particular, the RISAB shall record deviations and not provide such services if the deviations jeopardize the technical validity of that specific activity.

RISAB's shall inform the RISAS Scheme Manager of any issues relating to possible non-conformity of products, including where this may be relevant due to the need to postpone specific on-site visits in the context of the on-going efficacy of RISAS Certification.

4. RISAB Accreditation

- 4.1 RISAB Accreditation will be carried out on a 'remote' basis until at least 31st July 2020. The process for remote assessment will be consistent with the approach advised by UKAS available at <https://www.ukas.com/coronavirus/> in accordance with RISAS/004, Issue 3.

Contact:

In the event of any queries on this Briefing Note, please contact:
John Barber at RSSB on 020 3142 5588,
or by e-mail to john.barber@rssb.co.uk

Signature/Name

J Barber
(Principal Assurance Engineer)