

# Membership rules changed to enable greater psychometric testing provision

April 5, 2022



The **Office of Rail and Road** (ORR) has said it is accepting commitments from the Railway Assessment Centre Forum (RACF) that mean it will open the body to non-members.

This will, **ORR** has said, cut restrictions on entry to the market and increase value for money by giving train companies greater choice.

The new set of commitments also addresses ORR's competition concerns around the availability of psychometric testing for train drivers.

RACF is an industry group, which was established to ensure that the psychometric assessment process for the recruitment and monitoring of train drivers is applied correctly across the industry.

RACF is currently made up of 13 members, including train operating companies, freight operating companies and a private training specialist.

In Britain, around 4,000 train drivers undergo psychometric assessments every year.

Testing ensures driver competence in areas such as the ability to concentrate, hand coordination skills and behavioural preferences, which are critical to the safe operation of a train.

The new commitments from RACF include:

- Objective, transparent, publicly available membership rules;
- An application process that does not require applicants to unnecessarily provide commercially sensitive information;
- Set timescales and processes for the appointment of mentors; and
- An appeal process that allows a rejected applicant a right to appeal to an independent barrister.

ORR opened its investigation in March 2021 into RACF membership after being concerned that certain aspects of RACF's rules were restricting competition concerning the provision of train driver psychometric assessments.

Grahame Horgan, Head of Competition at ORR said: "These commitments from the RACF are a welcome step forward after our concerns that it may have infringed competition law in relation to its membership rules in the UK.

"These tests play an important part in ensuring train drivers are safe to drive trains. Opening up the market for the provision of training will promote choice and value for money for train operators.

"Our intervention sends a clear signal to other trade associations within the sector to ensure that their rules are compliant with competition law."

ORR's decision to close its investigation is conditional upon the implementation of the commitments by RACF by 2 May 2022.

Helpful [advice](#) has been produced by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to help trade associations avoid breaking competition law.