

ORR publishes key documents for future regulation of the GB rail network

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The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) has today published four key documents dealing with future regulation of the GB rail network.

Three of these support ORR's 2023 periodic review (PR23) which will determine Network Rail's outputs and funding for Control Period 7 (2024-2029) and, in the future, apply to Great British Railways, the new body that will oversee much of rail transport in Great Britain.

Periodic reviews are a principal mechanism by which ORR holds Network Rail to account, and secures value for money.

ORR will continue developing the approach for PR23 this year. This is ahead of receiving the UK and Scottish Governments' decisions on the level of funding they want to provide the infrastructure with; and what, in return, they want it to deliver. ORR expects these decisions to be made in October 2022 for England and Wales, and November 2022 for Scotland. Following this, ORR expects Network Rail to submit its strategic business plan in February next year.

ORR will then produce a draft determination and, later in the year, a final determination. This will set out the decisions on what ORR will hold Network Rail to account for delivering over CP7. The determination will also set out how funding should be allocated across Network Rail's different business units and priorities, based on the assessment of its strategic business plan.

ORR has also today published its response to the UK Government's consultation on proposed legislation within the forthcoming Transport Bill designed to enact reforms to the structure and operation of the GB rail network. Part of ORR's wider work supports effective implementation of rail reform plans.

The documents published today, are:

- **A consultation on our proposed policy framework** for how we hold the infrastructure manager for the national rail network (currently Network Rail) to account for the funding it will receive for Control Period 7 (CP7)
- **A consultation on the proposed measures** we would use to hold the infrastructure manager to account in CP7 – this is designed to support ORR's consultation on the policy framework
- **ORR's guidance to Network Rail, as the infrastructure manager, on the production of its February 2023 Strategic Business Plan (SBP)**. The SBP will set out, based on governments' decisions about CP7 funding and outputs, what it intends to deliver for CP7
- **ORR's response to the UK Government on its consultation on proposed legislative reforms to implement the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail**. The UK Government is currently consulting on changes to legislation to implement rail reform, which includes the creation of a new body – Great British Railways (GBR) – that will both own the railway infrastructure and let and manage the passenger rail contracts currently awarded by the Department for Transport. ORR's response sets out our views on the proposed legislative changes.

Will Godfrey, ORR's Director of Economics, Finance and Markets, said: "Periodic reviews like PR23 are one of the main ways in which we look to secure value for money for users and funders of the railway. Periodic reviews help ensure there is sufficient long-term focus on issues such as safety, performance, asset sustainability, and efficiency.

"ORR looks forward to hearing from stakeholders on the proposals set out in our PR23 consultations and working with industry to set the right long-term framework for the rail infrastructure for 2024-2029."