

Minutes of Meeting

Date: 10/08/26

Subject: V4 Disputes Discussion

Attendees: [REDACTED] – Network Rail (MAM)
 [REDACTED] – First Rail (MW)
 [REDACTED] – GBRf (DG)
 [REDACTED] – GBRf (JB)
 [REDACTED] – FLL (TQ)
 [REDACTED] – GWR (SB)
 [REDACTED] – GA (SY)

Minutes prepared by: [REDACTED]

Item	Notes	Action
1 – 17 Planning Principles	MAM questions what the crux of the disputes are for, the 17PP are in as guidance and are not the only thing in the NTPR document that aren't a rule. MW challenges that inclusion doesn't add anything and that there is duplication and contradiction created by their inclusion. Wording changes on top of this are not agreeable (MAM already commented that the wording changes will be reverted following feedback from outside this meeting). Specific cases and principles are unacceptable, suggesting we're constraining the ORR's ability to grant rights. MAM explains inclusion is for the purpose of making them accessible for the industry. Not adding something is not a reason to place something in dispute. Happy to review contradictions if needed. SY agrees with MW's comments but hasn't formally disputed. If they're only guidance, why are they being added to other process documents such as PDNS documents? MAM can't comment on other processes outside of NTPR. We've made it clear that they do not have to be followed, there's nothing being constrained and nothing binding in there.	

Item	Notes	Action
	MW highlights the first 7-8 principles are duplicating information in the NTPR. MAM agrees the core process and National methodology are listed in the document, but that NTPR also allows for other methodology to be used where appropriate. The 17PP expand on this and provide some consideration for how we may approach this. MW says that they do not expand on or add onto, just duplicates and in places contradicts. SB says GWR haven't disputed the entirety, just discomfort with non-rules in proximity of technical rules. The document is called "Rules", not guidance. This creates a grey area, allowing for dilution of the rest of the document. Have disputed TP17 which is dangerous even as guidance. Have them in a separate "Best Practices" document instead. MAM challenges that dwell time methodology appendix is purely guidance and not a rule. There are plenty of other examples of supportive information that isn't a rule. SB challenges that this provides technical processes, 17PP does not. JB highlights that there is a comment regarding future mandatory status of some rules which is unacceptable. MAM says industry leaders have requested that some are made mandatory. Take that sentence out and is it clear enough that they're guidance. JB challenges that it's not been adequately consulted. MAM draws attention to industry consultation of the 17 for months prior to inclusion, including through National forum and working groups. JB maintains that this does not constitute Part D process and OPSG / NPB have no bearing on this and no standing. MW insists that changes such as this cannot circumvent the National forum, the industry recognised method for agreeing changes. MAM challenges that TPR forums are not recognised anywhere formally as the only location TPR change can be agreed. MW says operators do not feel adequately consulted and TPR forum is recognised as the location for it. MAM adds that the 17 were consulted through forum, they were formally consulted in the Draft document which is the formalised method for consulting TPR change. MW disagrees that this constitutes proper consultation.	
2 – Regional 5.2.2 and National 1.15	MAM understands NW&C have issued details and documentation regarding the specific restrictions there. Core question for this discussion is which process elements are under dispute, what about the methodology is an issue, would better communication of evidencing for the restrictions help drop disputes against specific constraints included in the regional documents.	

Item	Notes	Action
	JB says not necessarily, regional depends on what comes back and whether it makes sense, so that would be case by case. Biggest issue for us is the level crossing inclusion. MAM asks is the real issue the lack of understanding of the methodology. MW says it's certainly a big part of it, but not strictly the only problem. What technical basis have any of these constraints been included by? NW&C feels very un-technical. Methodology seems opaque. Would welcome information on the technical assessments. How can it be ready when we don't know what it is. Recognise Anglia do a huge amount of work on level crossing risk and their TCRA is very well put together, but sounded like route weren't particularly aware of them going into the rules. MAM acknowledges challenging timescales. A lot of the constraints on quantum came out between V3 and 4 because we requested information from route teams on and they couldn't provide, so that's a positive, but sharing the methodology on the ones that remain would be a good step forward. SB says he spoke to production about the existing GWML constraint which came out, because applying what was there was nonsensical. Came from Reading platform occupancy in the old layout which is 10 years gone. MW says that's a positive step, but now we need to understand what we've been given for the ones that have stayed. MAM will hand that question over to the relevant TPRS'. MAM moves conversation on to NTPR doc and 1.15. Asks for more insight into what exactly the problems are. SB fundamentally object to the level crossing risk entry as disagree with these being included at all. Suggests timescales are unworkable, LX risk changes too quickly and at too short notice for TPR change to occur. Can come across as limiting requests for capacity. Discussed at TCRA and mitigations are agreed, but it's not practical to include these in TPRs. MAM says the purpose is not to limit growth, it's to understand risk and react/mitigate accordingly. Timescales have been discussed, does not fit within traditional timescales but TPR change can be more fluid and we don't use the short term change as much as we could. SB challenges this doesn't support sensible decision making, how can we make decisions if the rules may change outside of standard timescales and possibly overnight. MAM adds the restrictions should never decrease capacity, it only goes in the document if it's fully risk assessed and no mitigation can be found which cuts out a lot of the possible cases that have been suggested. SB says we still can't accept that any risk would have no mitigation.	

Item	Notes	Action
------	-------	--------

MW adds that these comments are potentially contradicting with what actually went into 1.15, which is that where additional capacity could exist it needs to be risk assessed. What's in the document is that if quantum increases in a bid then something needs to be done, which isn't a rule. 1.15 doesn't help with that. Feels like it's all been rushed in and needs more thought. **JB** adds that a lot of this is that criteria seems far too subjective, we'd like to understand on what basis. **MAM** asks if transparency of the process would help, **JB** unsure as examples he's seen are still subjective. Doesn't clarify who needs to do the risk assessment. **MAM** adds that "relevant route team" is in currently, does that need more clarity? **JB** says yes. **MAM** observes that any rule could entail a level of subjectivity in the form of performance uplift. **JB** says that that's done by agreement. **MAM** says we can define this better and improve collective understanding. **MW** says whilst he objects to both Anglia and WCML constraints, the WC example better constitutes a rule, but the Anglia process makes it more opaque. Not what TPRs are there to do, plenty of processes sit outside TPRs but we're trying to interfere with it and add something that doesn't belong in the rules.

MAM asks that outside of 1.15.5 and level crossing risk assessment, are there any disputes to the rest of 1.15? Are we content with the rest of the wording and processes being in the document. **SB** disagrees, they've disputed other elements due to wording. Firebreaks need a less clumsy wording with less opportunity to misinterpretation. NTPR doesn't adequately link the process to congested infrastructure process, think these can't be applied without CI process. Nature of firebreak path is rarely a practical solution as well. Paragraph needs rewording and more consideration applied to implications. Need consensus that CI status is agreed and applied before it goes in the rules. A party could propose a constraint but implying any party can define one is wrong. Consultation should bring consensus. Open to proposals to reword those paragraphs (except LX). **MW** agrees with SB, 1.15.5 is not the only issue. Would like to understand how much of this came out of forum and how much was created by NR to go into V3/4. **MAM** responds concepts were discussed at forum, wording was created by NR then amended in V4 based on feedback. **MW** suggests this goes back to National forum for review and amendment.