

Section I

Executive summary

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The purpose of our route plans is to describe the way in which we intend to deliver our relevant licence obligations on a route-by-route basis and enable our customers, funders and other stakeholders to plan their activities. It is based around 26 Strategic Routes which are aligned as closely as possible to the relevant traffic flows, the SRA's route definitions and our own delivery units.

Each individual route plan contains a description of the route – including a physical description and a summary of route capability and current and expected future utilisation. Tables of forecast expenditure and activity levels are presented. We outline the plans for delivering the baseline outputs for each of our major assets on the route and specific local performance initiatives. Current route development work – funded by our stakeholders – is summarised. Finally there is a short section outlining emerging issues on the route.

The document outlines enhancement schemes that we are committed to deliver. It also describes those schemes, such as the West Coast Route Modernisation, the Southern Region New Trains Programme and TPWS+, which we are developing for the SRA and others, including the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government, for delivery during the next few years. We also include Safety Plan enhancements and increases in passenger capacity at some of our Managed Stations.

We provide further information that will enable the reader to understand the plans more fully. It contains a description of significant bottlenecks in our capacity as identified through our route capacity utilisation work described in Section 6 of the Technical Plan. A glossary of terms used in the document, a table identifying stations to routes and a description of Project Development Phases are also included.

At this stage the plans represent an articulation of our bottom up delivery plans, presented on a route-by-route basis. It is our intention to strengthen route based planning significantly to align delivery more closely to our customers' requirements. EU Directive 2001/14 reinforces our role in identifying capacity constraints and carrying out capacity studies to address the issues. The Strategic Route plans will play a key role in making trade-offs to ensure that our outputs are delivered within a constrained budgetary framework.