Guidance for Product Acceptance via a System Review Panel

The level of assurance and scrutiny required for product acceptance is determined using the Criticality Matrix found in: NR/L2/RSE/100/05 [Issue: 4] Product acceptance and change to Network Rail operational infrastructure.

Only items with the highest level of criticality may require an System Review Panel (SRP) and only then when they are multi-disciplinary in nature. In practice, less than 2% of Product Acceptance requires an SRP – this includes products such as the Mobile Maintenance Train and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition systems. Although rare, it is also possible for additional complexity to be discovered during the process of Product Acceptance, in such cases a Lead Reviewer may refer a product for review by SRP part-way through the process.

System Review Panels are governed by NR/L2/RSE/100/07 [Issue: 3] System Review Panels All SRPs act under authority delegated by Network Rail Assurance Panel and are given a remit within which they must operate. There are five types of SRP:

1. Regional SRPs, which review changes to infrastructure on a given Region
2. Generic Asset or System SRPs
3. Product Specific SRPs, which review the Product Acceptance of a given product
4. Vehicle Compatibility Review Group, which reviews changes to vehicle assets
5. Major Enhancement Project SRPs, which may be set up to review changes made by a Major Programme.

Of these five, only Generic Asset or System and Product Specific SRPs may undertake the role of reviewing Product Acceptance. These SRPs are resourced and appropriately competent to undertake this task for the network as a whole and are not specific to any Region.

Most products which are sufficiently complex as to require an SRP are also likely to require a trial. Trials must be undertaken off the mainline infrastructure, where possible. Where a trial can only be undertaken on the mainline infrastructure, the Sponsor must liaise with the Regional SRP who will undertake a review of the CSM-RA documentation produced to support the change being made to the infrastructure, the Regional SRP do not review the Product Acceptance of a product going through the Product Acceptance process.

The role of the Product Acceptance (and Functional) System Review Panel in the Product Acceptance Process

A Product Acceptance SRP will employ a structured and systematic process to review submissions, with a view to identifying weaknesses in the applicant's understanding of the risk associated with the introduction of a new product. This challenge provides assurance to the business that products being introduced are fit for purpose, reliable and safe to use in the manner proposed.

The role of the Regional System Review Panel in Product Acceptance

Regional System Review Panels review proposed changes to infrastructure on their given Region, this includes projects which include products which are on trial. Details of the process for engaging with a Regional SRP can be found in Appendix One of NR/L2/RSE/100/07