



RAIL INDUSTRY SAFETY AND STANDARDS BOARD

ABN: 58 105 001 465

ADMIN 4.4 PRODUCT INDEPENDENT REVIEW

VERSION 7

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13 January 2023

1 Purpose

This document describes the process that applies to the Independent Review (IR) phase of a Product Development Process. It sets out the process by which a RISSB draft product is independently reviewed before it progresses to the approval stage.

This procedure applies to the development of RISSB ACOP products (Standards, Codes of practice, Guidelines and Rules) and is designed to provide:

- an independent and critical review of a draft RISSB Product to identify potential deficiencies and suggest improvements for consideration by the development group members before publication;
- assurance to RISSB major stakeholders (Standing Committees and RISSB Board) that RISSB product is good practice, fit for purpose, and addresses critical risks within the railway industry.

An independent review (IR) must be undertaken when developing new Standards. The IR phase is optional for all other RISSB product developments, including the review of existing Standards. The process outlined in this procedure applies to all independent reviews undertaken on ACOP products.

2 Independent Review

The IR is undertaken on draft RISSB products after content developed through the drafting process has been completed and before the product is approved by the Development Group (DG).

2.1 Review Requirements

The IR process provides the development group with an independent view of whether the product developed delivers on its intended purpose and scope, considers all identified hazards and controls, represents good practice, and is appropriate for the Australian rail industry.

The DG shall review the comments provided by the independent reviewer following the same process applied to the review of public consultation.

2.1.1 Review Scope and Purpose

The development of any RISSB product is by proposal, agreement and approval of the rail industry, Standing Committee, and RISSB Board.

The reviewer shall provide an opinion on the adequacy of the draft product in addressing the product's defined Purpose and Scope.

2.1.2 Consider Hazards and Controls

All RISSB ACOP products are developed to address applicable hazards from within the Australian rail industry as documented in the RISSB's hazard register.

Applicable hazards /risks are those identified as part of the initial project proposal, as well as additional hazards identified and agreed upon between the Standard's author and Development Group during the draft's development.

Reviewers shall consider identified hazards/ risks and confirm that an appropriate and corresponding hazard control measure/s exists within the product for each hazard identified.

The reviewer should recommend any significant hazards/ risks not identified and provide recommendations on how those hazards are addressed within the product.

To undertake these tasks, the reviewer shall have access to RISSB's ARRM (the Australian Rail Risk Model) and Hazard Register.

2.1.3 Assessment of Good Practice

Reviewers shall assess and comment on whether the content within the product (including hazard controls) is good practice and fit for purpose. This task entails checking that the content is at least aligned with recognised Standards, Codes, Rules, or controls used domestically and internationally. Note that "good practice" does not mean "best practice".

2.1.4 Determine Rail Industry appropriateness

Reviewers shall indicate their agreement or otherwise that the content presented in the draft is appropriate for the Australian rail industry nationally. This indication should consider RISSB's objective of assisting the rail industry in managing rail safety, improving efficiency and achieving safety outcomes through standardisation, interoperability, and harmonisation.

The focus may include reviewing mandatory and recommended requirements, which target missing, incorrect or inappropriate requirements to be considered good practice.

2.2 Recommendation

Reviewers shall provide a recommendation for consideration by the development group for any deficiencies identified in the above four tasks. A recommendation may require that a reviewer state where they believe the existing content might be deficient; and suggest how content might be improved or extended. Where the response is unknown, the reviewer should provide a means to determine a solution.

3 Procedure

3.1 Engagement of an Independent Reviewer

RISSB project managers shall identify an independent person/party to review a draft RISSB product.

The engagement communication shall include such details as –

- IR expectations (tasks, exceptions)
- IR report expectations (solutions, format)
- expected delivery date.

This person/party may be chosen at the same time the product's author is chosen or later. The review must be independent of the product's authoring process.

If the independent reviewer is engaged through an RFS process, engagement shall be in accordance with the RISSB procuring a contractor process.

3.2 Reviewer

A reviewer should be independent of the Standard's authoring process. A reviewer's independence is conditional upon the person or organisation selected:

- not have participated as a member of the draft product's Development Group or contributed to the product development; and
- not being a current RISSB employee, RISSB Standing Committee member, or RISSB Board Member.

3.3 The Report

The IR will be undertaken on the version of the draft RISSB standard/code released for public consultation. The review will be launched for all other products on the version ready for sign-off by the DG.

The IR report format consists of two main components:

- The reviewer provides specific findings, observations, and suggestions as comments in the PDF of the draft standard.
- The reviewer provides a summary of findings on the RISSB approved template.

The RISSB project manager and the development group members shall review the draft report issued at the completion of IR.

The reviewer then presents the finding found in the report to the DG members at the next development group meeting.

The DG members shall then consider the recommendations and decide on the necessary response and action. The final decision on what is included in the RISSB product remains with the DG members.

3.4 Review Exclusions

Independent review does not involve –

- checking or commenting on style, format, or structure;
- reviewing the development process;
- performing an independent quality assurance audit;
- suggesting rewording (where not related to ‘good practice’ requirements);
- having a general discussion about an issue without concluding with an unambiguous statement.

3.5 Request for Independent Review

RISSB project managers, in consultation with the standing committee and development group, may decide that an IR is necessary for a specific product.

For example, a new guideline or a code of practice may be identified by the RISSB project manager and the standing committee as requiring IR.

Where this service is required to be contracted out, the RISSB project manager shall seek approval from the senior management by presenting the reason for conducting an IR.

4 Records Management

All records relevant to this procedure should be stored on the depot for auditing and accreditation purposes, including the following information:

- Documents associated with Request for Services (RFS).
- Copies of related communication.
- Meeting minutes & decision
- Reports.

The RISSB project manager shall ensure that the relevant information is captured and stored.