

**PROCEDURES FOR INTERNATIONAL
AD-HOC PATH REQUEST MANAGEMENT**

Appendix to the RNE Procedures (handbooks) for International Path Requests

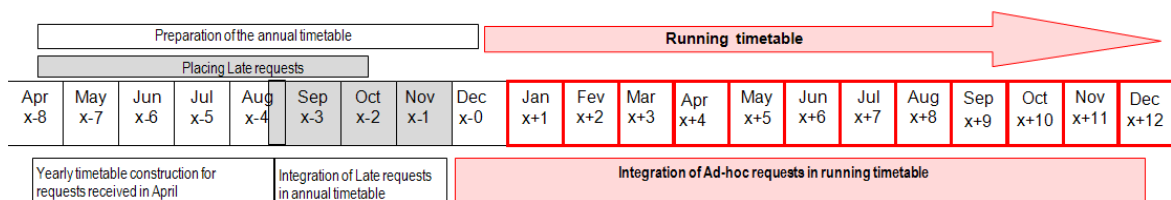
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1 Introduction / Scope

This handbook describes the process by which applicants may request and obtain international paths during the running timetable. This phase is the so-called period for “**Ad-hoc path requests**”.

Art. 23 of EU Directive 2001/14 describes the handling of “Ad-hoc path requests” as follows: “The infrastructure manager shall respond to ad-hoc requests for individual train paths as quickly as possible, and in any event, within five working days.”

2 Reference documents

This handbook follows the principles set down in the

- European Directives 2001/12-14
- RNE handbook “Procedures for International Path Requests” in relation to
 - Abbreviations and definitions
 - Who can submit a path study request or path order?
 - Documents for the path request process

3 Path orders

3.1 Period for placement of path orders

It is possible for applicants to place ad-hoc path requests for an individual train at any time during the running timetable and there is no specific time frame.

3.2 Path order form

For best results, it is strongly recommended that applicants use either Pathfinder (Internet-based communication system for the optimisation of international train path coordination) or the RNE path order form and include all requested information.

Both Pathfinder and the RNE form help to ensure that the path order is valid for the whole journey. Also, if you are an applicant group, it allows each of your members to confirm and/or sign and share responsibility for the path order.

3.3 Preparation of requests

Applicants prepare the path request, which they must harmonise together. This is the precondition for Infrastructure Manager/Allocation Body (IM/AB) acceptance.

The path request must provide all mandatory data which are specified either in Pathfinder or the RNE path order form. In case it is not possible to fill in all mandatory fields, it is recommended to ask any IM/AB for information before placing the path request.

Applicants may use a catalogue path for their path request. The catalogue of train paths is intended as an aid for preparing applications for paths. However, there is no guarantee that a request for a path from the catalogue can be given a positive response in the allocation

process as the catalogue path requested may already have been allocated following a path request submitted earlier.

3.4 Submitting the path order

The way to submit the path order in Pathfinder is described in the “Pathfinder Process Guidelines”. If applicants wish to use the path order form, they must submit the form to an IM/AB involved in the relevant path. If the path was the subject of a previous path study request, please send the form to the same recipient as for the path study request, citing the reference of the study request.

The IM/AB (coordinating IM/AB) receiving the request will be in charge of the communication with the applicant that has applied for the path.

3.5 Constructing and coordinating “Ad-hoc path requests”

The IM/AB receiving the request (coordinating IM/AB) will check the consistency of the request and designate the other IM/AB involved in the path request. It can also make observations and recommendations regarding possible solutions, such as the use of remaining catalogue paths sections. The coordinating IM/AB may also specify within which time frame the answer must be given to the customer and who should start working on the path. In any case, the time limit of five working days mentioned in Figure 1 has to be respected.

In case the request is not consistent, it may be rejected by the coordinating IM/AB – who should always explain why it has been rejected. If the request does not provide enough information for path construction, the IM/AB will ask the applicant to provide the missing data. The response time of the IM/AB starts only once the IM/AB are in possession of all necessary information.

IMs/ABs work on the request for their respective part using available sections of catalogue paths whenever possible, as well as remaining capacity. IMs/ABs need to take into account and check with their partners the infrastructure availability. This work must be fully integrated into the process of harmonisation.

Allocation for ad-hoc path requests is done within the remaining capacity, giving the best possible answer. In case of conflicts between several ad-hoc path requests, the principle of “first come, first served” will be applied.

The coordinating IM/AB must inform the applicant as soon as it aware that a train path is not available. If possible, the IM/AB will provide an alternative proposal.

3.6 Path offer

IMs/ABs harmonize the international path offer together by taking any necessary coordination initiatives.

Once the answer has been harmonised, the coordinating IM/AB is in charge of sending the offer – with remarks if necessary. Remarks may consist of an indication regarding temporarily uncertain times depending on infrastructure availability (e.g. works/maintenance).

Offers for ad-hoc path requests are made by the coordinating IM/AB within the time frame mentioned in Figure 1.

EU Directive 2001/14 mentions that “the infrastructure manager shall respond to ad-hoc path request for individual train paths as quickly as possible”. It is assumed that this is applicable to a limited number of paths, to be handled within five working days.

In case of, for example:

- several numbers of paths in one request,
- specific requirements for the path (e.g. system restrictions),
- additional gauge clearance
- train parameters which require a specific IM study
- passenger trains inclusive of all transfer runs directly connected to the following items
 - movements involving steam locomotives (coal)
 - special consignments
 - test trains and recording runs
- movements by vehicles whose max. permissible speed is less than 40 km/h (e.g. ancillary vehicles)
- movements which, owing to the vehicles registered or the nature of the line, require a special type of running schedule (e.g. train control for secondary lines),

the offer may take longer than five working days. The customer will be informed about the date on which he will receive the detailed path offer. The concrete restrictions will be published in the national Network Statements.

3.7 Path acceptance

If all applicants agree with the offer, the leading applicant sends a formal acceptance notification, either by using the relevant function in Pathfinder or in writing (if the RNE form was used). Due to the shortage of time before train run, applicants only have 24 hours to accept the path offer. Any remark by the applicant will be treated as far as possible within the answer. The IM/AB will make an alternative proposal; however, if “No alternatives” are possible, the applicant will have to prepare a new request. If applicants do not give an answer within 24 hours, the path offer will be treated as described in the Network Statement of the IM/AB.

3.8 Path allocation

Formal path allocation is a legal act. For the time being, this will remain a national process and contracts will be delivered IM/AB by IM/AB.

3.9 Modification of an allocated ad-hoc path

A modification refers to the phase after the acceptance of the offer by the applicant. A modification contains the following two steps: “cancelling of the path offer” and “new request for creation of a new path”. Of course, the cancellation of the previous path will only be made when the applicant accepts the offer for the new path. However, if the offer does not fulfil the needs of the applicant, then the cancellation will not be made. The former path will be kept until further information from the applicant has been received.

This process will give the best chance to the applicant to receive a path offer fulfilling its wishes. A modification enables the customer to have a new path attached to the original request.

Modifications of details which have no consequences for the characteristics of a train path (characteristics include train speed and train type, or other items), do not require the path to be cancelled and re-applied for.

3.10 Specific feature for ad-hoc requests submitted 5 days before train run

Because of the very short time before train run, a different process is applicable.

Path order form

The TAF/TSI regulations require the use of a telematic application for making path requests at very short notice. As long as this application is not available, the RNE path order form should be used for these requests.

Preparation and submission of path order

See explanations in Figures 3.3 and 3.4.

Constructing the path / offer / acceptance

Usually, the IM/AB at the origin of the path starts constructing it. The first thing that needs to be looked at is whether any catalogue paths are available. If no catalogue path is available, a new section of path needs to be created. In order to provide the applicant(s) with an answer (path offer) in the shortest possible time, the new path proposal should be build section by section from IM/AB to IM/AB. The creation of the path should start from the point of origin. The "first" IM/AB creates the path for its part of network until the handover point or at an agreed border station with the next neighbouring IM/AB. The section of path is created and offered to the applicant. The applicant checks the path and confirms his acceptance immediately. The acceptance process takes place according to each national regulation.

After acceptance, when time allows, the following IM/AB can start building its section until the next handover point. This process continues until the final destination is reached.

Each Infrastructure Manager/Allocation Body has set up specific contact points (One-Stop-Shop, or OSS) to ensure an efficient handling of the international path requests submitted with the RNE path order form. Applicants are therefore asked to submit the path order form to one of the involved OSSs. Contact details: http://www.railneteuropa.com/cont/aboutus_oss.aspx