

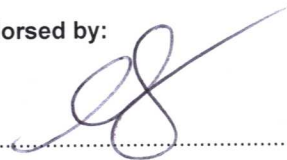
Ref	NR/SP/ASR/036
Issue	4
Date	April 2007

Specification

Network Rail Assurance Framework

Endorsement & Authorisation

Endorsed by:



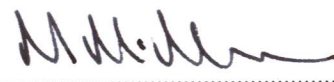
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Issue record

Issue	Date	Comments
1	August 01	Document Withdrawn
2	August 02	Clarification regarding the National Core Audit Programme, types of audit etc., and title change to Network Rail Audit Manual.
3	April 05	Changes to reflect the company reorganisation and incorporation of auditing guidance into the audit training course material.
4	April 07	Changes to reflect the company reorganisation under SAF5 Phase 1, the re-titling of the document, and the incorporation of the Self-Assurance Specification (NR/SP/ASR/032)

Implementation

The Specification applies to all audits and the self-assurance process initiated by the company with the exception of audits of a commercial or financial nature carried out by Network Rail's Internal Audit department. Issue 4 of the Specification is to be implemented from the date of issue, 7 April 2007.

Compliance

This Network Rail Specification is mandatory and must be complied with by Network Rail from 7 April 2007.

However all projects which have formally completed GRIP Level 4 shall continue to comply with the Issue of any relevant Network Rail Standards current when GRIP Level 4 was reached and not to comply with requirements contained herein unless the designated Head of Corporate Assurance and Accident Investigation (Head of CA&AI) has stipulated otherwise in the accompanying Briefing Note.

Where the Head of CA&AI has specified that all projects will comply with the requirements, specific authority not to comply can be sought in the usual manner using the appropriate non-compliance authority processes described in Network Rail Standard, [NR/SP/STP/045](#) Managing the Process for Non-compliance Authority (formerly RT/LS/P/045).

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Supply

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1 Purpose

The Network Rail assurance framework aims to provide the Board and management groups with confidence in the levels of compliance with Network Rail's Health & Safety Management System, formal company standards, procedures, legislation, and contractual requirements.

This Specification sets out to clearly and concisely explain the different levels of audit and the self assurance processes within Network Rail, and how to plan, carry out and review these effectively.

2 Scope

This Specification provides the necessary direction and guidance on the assurance framework, i.e. the different levels of audit and the self assurance processes, within Network Rail.

It is applicable to all parts of Network Rail's business, and is predicated on each function having:

- An understanding of key risks;
- Clearly defined controls to mitigate key risks embedded within process procedures
- Line management monitoring arrangements defined within these process procedures to provide ongoing verification of compliance with key controls and effectiveness in achieving objectives
- Annual self assessment based on the output of line management monitoring;
- Internal audits to verify integrity of line management monitoring;
- Appropriate feedback loops to review findings and trends, and confirm how to address deficiencies (which should include reference to Professional Heads as appropriate);
- Appropriate assurance information provided at each level of the functional organisation via the normal management review meetings.

Whilst the principles described in this Specification will be similar, it does not cover audits carried out by the HQ Internal Audit department or the audit process used by external bodies.

3 Reference documentation

[NR/LS/P/052](#) Accreditation and Development of Suppliers

4 Definitions

assurance

a positive declaration

audit

an objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment of the extent to which the organisation is complying with its documented systems and processes and the extent to which those systems and processes ensure good governance

audit conclusions

outcome of an audit, reached by the audit team after consideration of all the audit findings

audit criteria

set of policies, procedures or requirements against which collected audit evidence is compared

audit evidence

records, statements of fact or other information, relevant to the audit and which are verified (NOTE: Audit evidence can be qualitative or quantitative)

audit findings

results of the evaluation of the collected audit evidence against audit criteria

auditee

post/role and/or organisation being audited

auditor

person qualified to conduct audits

audit protocol

a document which is compiled, with appropriate technical input, containing questions and/or guidance which the auditor uses to assess compliance against commitments contained within Network Rail's Health & Safety Management System, formal company standards, procedures, legislation, and contractual requirements

audit team

one or more auditors conducting an audit, one of whom is appointed as lead auditor

NOTE 1 The audit team may also include auditors-in-training and, where required, technical experts

NOTE 2 Observers may accompany the team but do not act as part of the audit team

Lead Auditor

auditor responsible for leading and delivering the audit

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National Core Audit Programme (NCAP)

The annual programme of audits which can impact on safety – including Health & Safety Management System audits, special topic audits and cross-functional audits

National Integrated Audit Database (NIAD)

The system used to capture and monitor details of audits and resulting corrective actions

Non-Conformance Report (NCR)

a form used to report non-conformance, where there is evidence of a failure of a process or system or where there is evidence of a breakdown of the management system

Observation

a statement used to draw attention to good practice or describe circumstances where there is room for improvement, but insufficient evidence exists to justify raising a non-conformance report

risk

combination of the probability of occurrence of harm and the severity of that harm

risk analysis

systematic use of available information to identify hazards and to estimate the risk

risk control

actions implementing risk management decisions (Note: risk control may involve monitoring, re-evaluation, and compliance with decisions)

self-assurance

the process of annual verification – by line managers – of compliance with the requirements of Network Rail's Safety Management System

technical expert

person who provides specific knowledge or expertise with respect to a particular subject to be audited

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