



**Rail Safety & Standards Board**

**Published by**

**Rail Safety and Standards Board  
Evergreen House  
160 Euston Road  
London NW1 2DX**

**© Copyright 2008  
Rail Safety and Standards Board Limited**

# GN

**GO/GN3518**  
**Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management**  
Issue One: October 2008  
Railway Group Guidance for GO/RT3118



**Documents**

Document Sharing Hub

# Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

## Issue Record

| Issue | Date         | Comments                                                                                         |
|-------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| One   | October 2008 | Original document<br>Replaces and supersedes the previous guidance notes GO/GN3671 and GO/GN3672 |

## Superseded documents

The following Railway Group documents are superseded, either in whole or in part as indicated:

| Superseded documents                                                | Sections superseded | Date when sections are superseded |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| GO/GN3671 Guidance Note: Incident Response Planning                 | All sections        | 06 December 2008                  |
| GO/GN3672 Guidance Note: Incident Management and Evidence Gathering | All sections        | 06 December 2008                  |

## Supply

Controlled and uncontrolled copies of this Railway Group Guidance Note may be obtained from the Corporate Communications Department, Rail Safety and Standards Board, Evergreen House, 160 Euston Road, London NW1 2DX, telephone 020 7904 7518 or e-mail [enquiries@rssb.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@rssb.co.uk). Railway Group Standards and associated documents can also be viewed at [www.rgsonline.co.uk](http://www.rgsonline.co.uk)

# Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

## Contents

| Section           | Description                                                                                                                   | Page      |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Part 1</b>     | <b>Introduction</b>                                                                                                           | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1               | Purpose and structure of this document                                                                                        | 5         |
| 1.2               | Copyright                                                                                                                     | 5         |
| 1.3               | Approval and authorisation of this document                                                                                   | 5         |
| <b>Part 2</b>     | <b>Guidance on Incident Response Planning &amp; Management</b>                                                                | <b>6</b>  |
| 2.1               | Joint requirements for infrastructure managers and railway undertakings                                                       | 6         |
| 2.1.1             | Incident response plan preparation requirements                                                                               | 6         |
| 2.1.2             | Production of harmonised incident response plans                                                                              | 11        |
| 2.1.3             | Testing of incident response plans                                                                                            | 15        |
| 2.1.4             | Review and maintenance of incident response plans                                                                             | 17        |
| 2.1.5             | Identification of key personnel during an incident                                                                            | 17        |
| 2.1.6             | Gathering and preserving evidence                                                                                             | 17        |
| 2.1.7             | Arrangements for reviewing and feedback following an incident                                                                 | 20        |
| 2.2               | Requirements for infrastructure managers                                                                                      | 21        |
| 2.2.1             | Management responsibilities – identification of the 'lead organisation'                                                       | 21        |
| 2.2.2             | Establishment of command and control facilities and dissemination of critical information                                     | 21        |
| 2.2.3             | Appointment and role of a Rail Incident Officer (RIO)                                                                         | 23        |
| 2.2.4             | Provision of protocol information to key staff and organisations                                                              | 26        |
| 2.2.5             | Appointment and role of a Rail Incident Commander (RIC)                                                                       | 27        |
| 2.2.6             | Appointment and role of a Station Incident Officer (SIO)                                                                      | 27        |
| 2.2.7             | Station operations command and control facilities and liaison arrangements                                                    | 27        |
| 2.2.8             | Infrastructure manager appointed specialists' working and priorities                                                          | 28        |
| 2.2.9             | Gathering and preserving evidence – evidence co-ordinator's responsibilities                                                  | 28        |
| 2.2.10            | Gathering and preserving evidence – staff information cards                                                                   | 30        |
| 2.2.11            | Gathering and preserving evidence - identifying and dealing with site specific hazards                                        | 30        |
| 2.2.12            | Restoration of normal working - infrastructure manager consultation with other organisations prior to restoration of services | 30        |
| 2.2.13            | Declaration of incident conclusion                                                                                            | 30        |
| 2.2.14            | Final incident conclusion actions                                                                                             | 30        |
| 2.2.15            | Arrangements for reviewing & feedback following an incident                                                                   | 31        |
| 2.3               | Requirements for railway undertakings                                                                                         | 31        |
| 2.3.1             | Initial response by railway undertakings at the incident site                                                                 | 31        |
| 2.3.2             | Appointment and role of a Train Operators' Liaison Officer (TOLO)                                                             | 32        |
| 2.3.3             | Command and control facilities, critical information and liaison arrangements                                                 | 33        |
| 2.3.4             | Arrangements for reviewing & feedback following an incident                                                                   | 33        |
| <b>Appendices</b> |                                                                                                                               | <b>34</b> |
| Appendix A        | Rail industry incident command structure (abbreviated)                                                                        | 34        |
| Appendix B        | Rail industry incident command structure (full version)                                                                       | 38        |
| <b>Part 3</b>     | <b>Application of this document</b>                                                                                           | <b>41</b> |
| 3.1               | Application – infrastructure managers                                                                                         | 41        |
| 3.2               | Application – railway undertakings                                                                                            | 41        |

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

---

|                    |                                    |           |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 3.3                | Health and safety responsibilities | 42        |
| <hr/>              |                                    |           |
| <b>Definitions</b> |                                    | <b>43</b> |
| <hr/>              |                                    |           |
| <b>References</b>  |                                    | <b>44</b> |

# Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

---

## Part 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose and structure of this document

This document gives guidance on interpreting the requirements of Railway Group Standard GO/RT3118. It does not constitute a recommended method of meeting any set of mandatory requirements.

All requirements in GO/RT3118 are reproduced in the sections that follow. Guidance is provided as a series of sequentially numbered clauses prefixed 'GN' immediately below the text to which it relates. Where there is no guidance given, this is stated.

Specific responsibilities and compliance requirements are laid down in the Railway Group Standard itself.

### 1.2 Copyright

Copyright in the Railway Group documents is owned by Rail Safety and Standards Board Limited. All rights are hereby reserved. No Railway Group document (in whole or in part) may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or means, without the prior written permission of Rail Safety and Standards Board Limited, or as expressly permitted by law.

Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) members are granted copyright licence in accordance with the Constitution Agreement relating to Rail Safety and Standards Board Limited.

In circumstances where Rail Safety and Standards Board Limited has granted a particular person or organisation permission to copy extracts from Railway Group documents, Rail Safety and Standards Board Limited accepts no responsibility for, and excludes all liability in connection with, the use of such extracts, or any claims arising therefrom. This disclaimer applies to all forms of media in which extracts from Railway Group Standards may be reproduced.

### 1.3 Approval and authorisation of this document

The content of this document was approved by:

TOM Standards Committee on 19 August 2008.

This document was authorised by RSSB on 19 August 2008.

# Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

## Part 2 Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

### 2.1 Joint requirements for infrastructure managers and railway undertakings

#### 2.1.1 Incident response plan preparation requirements

2.1.1.1 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall liaise for the purpose of providing information for use in the development, drafting, production and maintenance of incident response plans.

GN01 This RGS document requires duty holders to work together in a process of co-operation in order to produce plans for dealing with accidents and incidents. It is the incident response plan co-ordinator who is responsible for making sure that co-operative liaison between all affected parties takes place.

GN02 Liaison meetings should be considered for holding at least annually and more frequently if requested. Consultation meetings should include representatives from the following organisations on an 'as required' basis (non-exhaustive list):

- a) Other infrastructure managers and railway undertakings
- b) Manager(s) and key staff
- c) Manager(s) responsible for safety arrangements
- d) Manager(s) responsible for humanitarian response arrangements
- e) Tenants
- f) British Transport Police
- g) Emergency services
- h) Local authorities
- i) Contractors
- j) Other organisations whose equipment or activities have the potential to import risk to the area covered by the incident response plan.

GN03 The liaison meetings should include the following subject matters for consideration (as appropriate) where their operations affect, or may affect, the area to be covered by an incident response plan (non-exhaustive list, in no implied order of importance or time-line):

- a) Communication between organisations
- b) Co-ordination of duties that contribute to the integrated response
- c) Arrangements for testing the incident response plans
- d) Provision of resources such as incident response equipment
- e) Exchange of information regarding specific hazards
- f) Confirmation of list of key personnel/roles and their contact details (both office hours and emergency)
- g) Review of accidents/incidents, including humanitarian response arrangements, to identify lessons learned.

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

- GN04 The consultation process may include visits to each other's sites and/or command and control facilities. This will help all parties involved to better understand each other's risks and methods of operation. This should also include each organisation's abilities to respond to an incident with, for example, specialist equipment, resources or trained personnel.
- GN05 Emergency services may benefit from contact with infrastructure managers for issues such as traction supply isolations, general lineside hazards and safety features, and railway undertakings to understand, for example, the details of rolling stock such as emergency access, types of glass used and other hazards that might be presented by the types of rolling stock operated.
- GN06 The British Transport Police can provide a co ordination role with the home department police forces. This relates particularly to the police incident response planning and the police role in site management and evacuation.
- GN07 Involvement of the local authority planning officers should aim for effective co-ordination with their incident response plans and allow access to their resources in response to an incident.
- GN08 The process should recognise that risks may be exported from the infrastructure managers' or railway undertakings' own activities to other organisations, or may be imported from other organisations into the infrastructure managers' or railway undertakings' areas of operation.
- GN09 Each potential incident presents particular potential risks to the safe operation of the railway. The incident response and, therefore, the incident response plan should be based on the primary need to control these risks. It should also be recognised by all parties concerned that whilst most proposed incident responses can be addressed during the planning process, some will inevitably need to be agreed after the incident, often at the incident site. Indeed these are often discussion points at the early co-ordination meetings held at the site and chaired by the police.
- GN10 Examples of incidents with potential risk that should be covered in incident response plans are grouped below. Please note that the suggested items in GN11 – 15 inclusive are not exhaustive and are included here for information purposes only.
- GN11 Infrastructure (non-exhaustive list):
- a) Structural failure such as embankment, bridge, tunnel or landslide
  - b) Major signalling failure
  - c) Obstruction of the line
  - d) Loss of key facilities such as signalling centre or electrical controls
  - e) Fire
  - f) Loss of traction current or other power failure
  - g) Level crossing failure/road vehicle trapped
  - h) Trespass/vandalism
  - i) Train failure (particularly where air conditioning/heating has failed or is unavailable).
- GN12 Train operation (non-exhaustive list):
- a) Derailment and/or collision
  - b) Incident involving dangerous goods

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

- c) Fire
- d) Person falling from or being struck by train
- e) On-train incidents (eg passenger taken ill, serious anti-social behaviour, criminal activity or security alert)
- f) Need for train evacuation (including risks from passenger initiated evacuation)
- g) Other events causing (or likely to cause) unplanned suspension or curtailment/diversion of services for a significant period.

### GN13 Station operation (non-exhaustive list):

- a) Fire – in particular the legal requirements of Regulation 12 of the Fire Precautions (Sub-surface Railway Stations) Regulations 1989 or relevant requirements imposed under the Fire Precautions Act 1971
- b) Need for station evacuation (including risks from passenger initiated evacuation)
- c) Abnormal congestion (however caused)
- d) Hazardous substances in stores/containers
- e) Foreseeable problems associated with major events such as football matches and demonstrations
- f) Specific risks associated with a station, the activities of other infrastructure managers and/or railway undertakings, or other activities such as tenancies
- g) Potential impact on off-site areas and the possible need to evacuate those areas
- h) Security alerts.

### GN14 General (non-exhaustive list):

- a) Fire
- b) Rain/snow/wind
- c) Extremes of weather temperature
- d) Flood/river/coastal
- e) Storms/damage
- f) Earthquake/tremor
- g) Security threats and explosions
- h) Adjacent factories
- i) Road crash adjacent to or onto railway
- j) Plane crash
- k) Tunnels and other structures
- l) Other incidents involving those activities external to the railway which could affect or spread to affect rail activities

# Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

m) Security problems.

GN15 Environmental (non-exhaustive list):

- a) Release of fuel from locomotive or power car fuel tanks
- b) Release of fuel or environmentally damaging goods from wagons
- c) Pollution of controlled water, land and air
- d) Release of effluent from retention tanks
- e) Release of battery acid or other chemicals
- f) Release of hydraulic oil from on-track machines.

2.1.1.2 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall liaise and reach a decision on the roles each organisation will take in the event of an incident.

GN16 See item GN78 & GN79 for additional guidance regarding the choice of lead organisation.

2.1.1.3 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall liaise and reach a decision on how the location of an incident will be identified.

GN17 The use of Ordnance Survey grid references is likely to be understood by the emergency services and external organisations and is preferred in communications with them rather than using railway specific terms such as engineers' line references (ELRs) or miles and chains.

2.1.1.4 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall liaise and reach a decision on how items of equipment, facilities and boundary interfaces will be managed in the event of an incident.

GN18 The terms 'equipment' and 'facilities' used in this requirement refers to items such as (non exhaustive list):

- a) Miscellaneous tools
- b) Medical, fire and rescue equipment
- c) Wagons, carriages and plant and their respective contents
- d) Incident site screening materials
- e) Facilities and equipment at muster points and safe assembly areas for staff and members of the public
- f) Facilities and equipment within areas designated for recovery activities
- g) Facilities and equipment at temporary storage sites and areas.

GN19 The way in which items of equipment and facilities owned by respective infrastructure managers and railway undertakings might be used and accounted for should be discussed and considered when organisations are working together to create, amend or update plans for dealing with incidents.

GN20 The term 'boundaries' refers to official geographic and legal boundaries of responsibility (such as property and site boundaries, depot boundaries, freight terminals etc.) where ownership (and therefore responsibilities) may differ.

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

- 2.1.1.5 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall liaise to discuss risks presented by their respective neighbours that might affect activities during the course of an incident.

GN21 Neighbours that may need to be identified include those operating:

- a) Sites subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999 (COMAH)
- b) Pipelines carrying hazardous material
- c) Pipelines operating at pressures in excess of 100 lbs/f/in sq (7 bar)
- d) Oil and chemical depots
- e) Nuclear facilities
- f) Airports and airfields
- g) Military establishments.

GN22 COMAH sites are those subject to regulations 7 to 12 of the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999. These regulations require the preparation of on and off site incident response plans that may include railway operations. The nature of the dangerous substances that can be involved means that COMAH sites do not necessarily have to be immediately adjacent to the rail network for them to constitute a potential risk to safe operation/activity. The potential involvement of infrastructure managers and/or railway undertakings depends on the content of the incident response plans prepared for the site.

GN23 Information concerning pipelines can be provided by:

- a) Health & Safety Executive
- b) Other statutory bodies
- c) Major pipeline operators such as Transco and the British Pipeline Agency
- d) Local authorities
- e) Network Rail Commercial Property.

GN24 Consultation to identify risks should include:

- a) Other infrastructure managers and railway undertakings (including risks from operation of trains carrying dangerous goods)
- b) External organisations
- c) Emergency services.

- 2.1.1.6 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall liaise and reach a decision on how common parts of the incident site and associated public areas will be treated in the event of an incident.

GN25 The severity and consequence of an incident can often be increased where certain location features and circumstances at the time make the situation more difficult to handle than it otherwise would be. The wording of the requirement expresses this in terms of how the *“common parts of the incident site will be treated”*. There is an important difference implied between ‘treated’ and ‘managed’ in that the requirement is not intended to provoke a discussion on who manages an incident site, but how circumstantial parts of it will be handled by those duty holders present.

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

Circumstances that might contribute to making an incident more severe and/or difficult to subsequently deal with could include (non-exhaustive list):

- a) Confined locations
- b) Structures such as tunnels, bridges, viaducts and deep or steep sided cuttings
- c) Remote locations where access is difficult
- d) Poor weather
- e) Locations without facilities (such as stations and buildings that are locked out of use or unstaffed at certain times)
- f) During holiday periods with reduced numbers of specialists available
- g) Incidence of fire
- h) Where dangerous goods are being carried
- i) Close proximity to Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites
- j) During peak flows of passengers.

### 2.1.2 Production of harmonised incident response plans

2.1.2.1 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall liaise to produce harmonised incident response plans that accord with their respective areas of operation.

- GN26 For the purposes of this Railway Group Standard the term 'harmonised' means that all of the parties concerned with producing their incident response plans for a given location or area:
- a) Should use consistent terminology and references throughout incident response plans and all documents pertaining to them
  - b) Should use the same command structure indicated in this RGS document and that contained in the Network Rail National Emergency Plan.
- GN27 Each plan may be split into sections so that individual parties can refer to and update only the section(s) that apply to them. Clearly co-ordinated plans between all responding organisations will help to contribute to efficient activities during the course of an incident.
- GN28 It is expected that an incident response plan for long routes would be split into manageable sections and not prepared as a single large plan covering areas of widely different character where they interface with each other.
- GN29 It is acceptable for separate incident response plans to exist for a station and the route through it providing the plans are co-ordinated.
- GN30 An incident response plan may be supported by other incident response plans or detailed instructions relating to specific scenarios for any area or activity identified. These might provide for example, work shutdown, fire and evacuation in other areas but it is important that these other incident response plans or detailed instructions interface with the overall planned requirement.
- GN31 At a large station, for example, responses will be required from the infrastructure manager responsible for station operations, all railway undertakings using that station, tenants at the station and, possibly, occupiers of adjacent premises. It may be possible to prepare a single incident response plan covering incident response at

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

the station, or each organisation may have their own sections of an overall incident response plan with one organisation in the lead.

- GN32 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings should ensure their contractors and suppliers have incident response plans for their own operations and these should be part of the coordinated response. They should ensure that the contractor or supplier delivers anything expected of them in the infrastructure managers or railway undertakings' incident response plan.
- GN33 The incident response plan may cover additional non safety issues providing this does not detract from the safety purposes of the plan.
- GN34 Typical content of an incident response plan might be (non-exhaustive list for example purposes only):
- a) Identification of the incident response plan
  - b) Identification of what triggers use of the incident response plan
  - c) Arrangements to take control of the incident and achieve a safe return to normal working
  - d) Arrangements to identify the site of the incident with access points or routes and method of communicating this to the emergency services and others who may need to know
  - e) Arrangements for achieving and maintaining a safe site
  - f) Arrangements for alterations to train services
  - g) Arrangements for premises (including stations)
  - h) Arrangements for key external organisations
  - i) Arrangements for managing people and evacuations
  - j) Arrangements for providing humanitarian assistance to those involved, their friends/families and those bereaved
  - k) Provision for effective communications including:
    - i) Arrangements for recording calls to and from command and control facilities
    - ii) Compatibility of radio systems used by different organisations
    - iii) Effectiveness of radio systems during incidents
    - iv) Arrangements for alternatives if radio systems fail or cannot be used
    - v) Details of hotline facilities to emergency services.
  - l) Contact arrangements for:
    - i) Infrastructure manager
    - ii) Other infrastructure managers and railway undertakings
    - iii) External organisations
    - iv) Emergency services
    - v) On-call staff
    - vi) Key sites (eg COMAH, pipelines)
    - vii) Specialists (eg dangerous goods experts).

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

- m) Arrangements for all on-site control functions as described in the Network Rail National Emergency Plan
- n) Where appropriate, arrangements for off-site control functions, including:
  - i) Appointment (by the infrastructure manager) of a rail incident commander (RIC)
  - ii) Arrangements for emergency services to identify which control facility is responsible for an incident site, particularly where the rail infrastructure layout and responsibility for it is complicated
  - iii) Arrangements to identify the location of an incident given an Ordnance Survey grid reference, street name, or postcode and to determine the relevant access points
  - iv) Arrangements for control facility to act as a single point of contact between the emergency services and other rail functions
  - v) Identification of the single point of contact for establishing the type and amount of dangerous goods involved and method of communicating this to the emergency services and others who may need to know
  - vi) Identification of the single point of contact for identifying hazardous materials present in rolling stock construction such as asbestos and PCBs and method of communicating this to the emergency services and others who may need to know.
- o) Identification of people and posts with allocated duties including:
  - i) Incident teams for specific sites or incidents (including any competences, training and briefing that might be required).
- p) Identification of resources required to implement the incident response plan
- q) Identification of external organisations with responsibilities and the response that is expected of them
- r) Arrangements to identify water, gas and electrical supplies together with any damage to them
- s) Arrangements for dealing with risks to the environment
- t) Arrangements for reporting incidents (see also GE/RT8047)
- u) Arrangements for gathering and preserving evidence
- v) Arrangements for securing the site
- w) Arrangements for a controlled return to normal operation, or a safe alternative
- x) Arrangements and minimum frequencies for testing the incident response plan including organising exercises
- y) Arrangements for the co ordination, planning, management and debrief when the incident response plan (or part of it) has been tested or used.

GN35 Infrastructure managers and railway undertakings may wish to cover non-safety risks in their incident response plans. Examples of other issues/considerations are given below.

GN36 Legal issues:

## Guidance on Incident Response Planning & Management

- a) Legality of proposed actions
- b) Legal penalties
- c) Contractor requirements
- d) Obligations to staff and customers
- e) Corporate commitments.

### GN37 Commercial considerations:

- a) Business recovery
- b) Impact on the organisation's short and long term revenue
- c) Impact on investment
- d) Impact on service commitments
- e) Alternative sourcing
- f) Additional costs
- g) Long term implications for recovery
- h) Remedial costs
- i) Loss of vital equipment, records and materials
- j) Provision of secure duplicate information (electronic and hard copy).

### GN38 Staff/customer/public relations considerations/arrangements:

- a) Single focus media contact control
- b) Public relations resources
- c) Implementation of a communication policy covering staff, contractors, customers, public, government/local authorities, competitors etc
- d) Impact on customer confidence
- e) Impact on personal issues
- f) Impact on image
- g) Pre-planned statements
- h) Market research/testing opinion
- i) Implications for marketing/advertising activities
- j) Company website content.

### GN39 Human resource implications:

- a) Immediate issues such as casualties and identification of those directly involved within, and external to, the activity or location
- b) Trauma counselling
- c) Managing the circumstances