ORR Business Plan 2024-25

Value for money from the railway

Holding Network Rail to account, as infrastructure manager for the GB mainline rail network, is one of the central ways in which ORR ensures that the railway is run in the most efficient way for users and funders.

April 2024 sees the commencement of Control Period 7 (CP7), following the successful conclusion of our Periodic Review (PR23).



We will look back at the last Control Period (CP6) in our Annual Assessment of Network Rail, where we will set out our views on the organisation's delivery to its stakeholders across its regions and

functions, highlighting any current and future risks and areas of concern.

We will follow this up with our Annual Efficiency and Finance Assessment in the third quarter of the year.

We will put measures in place to ensure that the settlement funding that Network Rail has been allocated for the next five years of CP7 is well spent, with a continued focus on better train performance for both passengers and freight customers.

We will produce a set of leading indicators of train performance (such as signaller vacancies), to meet a commitment we made in PR23.

In the spring we will conclude our licence breach investigation into train performance in Network Rail's Wales and Western Region.

As we look beyond PR23, we will commence work with industry to reset Network Rail's train performance trajectories and incentive regimes for the last three years of CP7 (2026-28).

Looking further ahead still to PR28, we intend to commence early work on the approach to charges for passenger and freight operators who use Network Rail's infrastructure.

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Another significant piece of work this year will be our 2024 Periodic Review (PR24) of High Speed 1 (HS1). This will set the charges for access to the HS1 network for Control Period 4 (CP4), the five years commencing in 2025, and will look in particular at HS1's affordability and asset sustainability. We will publish our Draft Determination in September and our Final Determination in January 2025.

Effective competition is an important driver of value for money. We will be concluding our market study on station catering in the summer, and we intend to launch a new market study during the course of 2024-25.

We will continue to monitor implementation of our previous recommendations from our market studies into signalling and ticket gates. As part of our day-to-day role, we will consider any complaints arising about anti-competitive behaviour, opening new cases under our competition enforcement powers where appropriate.

We will continue to provide advice to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) on rail related mergers and will also provide competition advice to government and other stakeholders, including on matters related to open access.

ORR is the publisher of official statistics for rail, including gathering and reporting information on rail safety, industry finance, passenger usage and rail performance. The transparent reporting of statistics provides valuable and accessible information to the public and helps us hold the rail industry to account on performance, efficiency and value for money.

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