

Office of Rail and Road

Who we are and what we do



Who we are...

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) is the independent economic and safety regulator for Britain's railways, and monitor of performance and efficiency for England's Strategic Road Network.

We regulate Network Rail including setting the targets it has to achieve and report regularly on its performance. We regulate health and safety standards and compliance across the whole rail industry. We also oversee competition and consumer rights issues – driving a better deal for rail passengers and taxpayers. We also regulate the HighSpeed1 link to the channel tunnel.

Since April 2015, we've been monitoring Highways England to hold the company to account on its commitments to improve performance and efficiency of England's Strategic Road Network.

What we do...

ORR's functions for road (England only)



Holding Highways England to account

ORR independently monitors Highways England's management of the strategic road network – the motorways and A-roads in England – holding Highways England to account for its performance and efficiency targets. ORR is focusing on securing better performance and value for money from the strategic road network, to benefit road users and the wider public.



Monitoring performance

We make sure that Highways England manages its road network to support safe, smooth-flowing journeys whilst minimising its impact on communities and the environment. We monitor the company's delivery of improvement schemes and the upkeep of its assets.



Securing value for money

We hold Highways England to account for achieving efficiency savings and for delivering schemes which provide real value for money.



Monitoring road user satisfaction

We make sure that Highways England is delivering a road network which meets the needs of road users. We work closely with Transport Focus and Highways England to understand users' priorities and their level of satisfaction with the network.



Advising and assisting government on road issues

We provide information, advice and assistance to government in understanding how Highways England is performing, and to advise on future performance and efficiency requirements.

Making the network safer for road users and workers

We monitor Highways England's commitment to achieve an ongoing reduction in injuries or deaths on the network by 40% by the end of 2020, against the 2005-09 average baseline.

What we do...

ORR's functions for rail (Scotland, Wales and England)



Keeping Britain's railways safe

ORR is working to make the rail industry more proactive in recognising and managing safety issues before passengers or rail workers come to harm. Our inspectors are out on the network every day and step in to take enforcement action when they find safety failings.



Holding Network Rail to account

ORR holds Network Rail to account for the day to day running of Britain's railways and for delivering its plans to provide passengers with a punctual, reliable service. We monitor its performance on train punctuality, upkeep of rail assets and delivery of big projects.



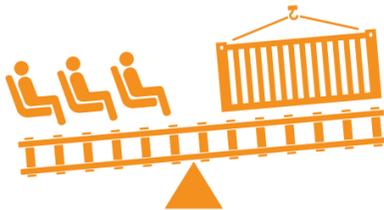
Protecting consumer interests

We ensure that the rail market is competitive and fair for passengers – keeping them at the heart of our railways. We push the industry to empower passengers with good information, better practices and reliable services to use our railways with confidence.



Providing clear information about railway funding and industry performance

We publish open data and information about the railway industry to promote transparency, and better understanding of our railways.



Making sure passenger and freight train companies have fair access to the rail network

We make sure passenger and freight train operating companies have fair access to the rail network – and that best use is made of capacity. If a railway operator wants to run trains on the network, it has to apply to us for a track access agreement with Network Rail.



Regulating the HighSpeed1 route & Channel Tunnel

We hold HighSpeed1 (HS1) Ltd to account on performance of its network for train services, upkeep of the network and meeting its efficiency targets. We're working with the French rail regulator ARAF to promote competition, full transparency and fair access to the Channel Tunnel.



Advising and assisting governments on rail issues

We provide information, advice and assistance to Westminster, Scottish and Welsh Governments on railways, railway services and railway safety.



Keeping markets under review

We have a responsibility to make sure the rail market remains fit for purpose and we keep railway markets under review – taking appropriate measures where markets are not working to the benefit of users or funders.