



Procedures for Modification of Allocated International Paths triggered by Applicants

Appendix to the Procedures for designing the annual timetable

Version 4.0

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Disclaimer, application, and transition period

This document is intended as a handbook for the implementation of the *Procedures for Modification of Allocated International Paths triggered by Applicants* as described by RNE. As neither legislation nor IT-systems are currently adapted to enable all the elements of TTR, individual TTR elements can only be implemented by the infrastructure managers to a limited extent for the upcoming timetable periods, starting in December 2024. If and when the legislation and IT-systems fully enable the implementation of all the elements of TTR, the different RNE handbooks on those elements should be adapted and applied to the process. The exact details for the transitional period are defined in the “*Scope of TTR for Timetables 2025-2028*”¹.

Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Bodies should adapt their internal processes and the Network Statement in line with the *Procedures for Modification of Allocated International Paths triggered by Applicants* from X-1, where X denotes the first timetable referring to the complete roll-out of TTR.

Note that the process described in the Handbook does not fully reflect the targeted TTR elements, it is expected that the handbook will be subject to update or refinement.

¹ Accessible via: <https://rne.eu/downloads/>

Version history

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1 Introduction and scope of this document

This handbook describes the process by which applicants may request a modification of allocated international paths from infrastructure managers and allocation bodies (hereafter IMs). This activity is the so-called “**Modification of allocated international paths**” (or short “Path Modification”). As the freight and passenger markets require such adoptions from the applicants, the path modification process shall provide the means to adapt to market changes.

However, the market needs should already be taken into account when placing initial requests. Therefore, IMs and applicants shall provide request processes which already respect the volatility of the market in the first place and reduce the need for path modification to a minimum. This subject has been tackled in the project “Redesign of the international timetabling process” (TTR).

A path modification may refer to one single running day, several days or all remaining days in the annual timetable; it is possible to modify the whole path section or just a part of it. It applies to international paths allocated in the annual timetable and to those allocated using the short-term planning process as well, including pre-arranged paths on the RFCs.

The handbook focuses on:

- major modifications, with multi-network impact², or in other words, those modifications in parameters of allocated international train paths that have a substantial impact on the allocated timetable, therefore, making it impossible to respect the allocated train path;
- Minor modifications, with and without multi-network impact, of allocated international train paths.

The differences between major and minor modifications are detailed in Annex B.

The modification process, as described in this document, is applicable from X-1 to X+12.

The process of major modifications that have no multi-network impact is out of the scope of the document. The procedures for modifying national paths shall be described in the Network Statement of each IM.

2 Reference documents

This handbook follows and is based on the principles set down in:

- Directive 2012/34/EU
- Regulation 913/2010
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 454/2011 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem ‘telematics applications for passenger services’ of the trans-European rail system (TAP TSI)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 1305/2014 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the telematics applications for freight subsystem of the rail system in the European Union and repealing the Regulation (EC) No 62/2006 (TAF TSI)
- TAP/TAF TSI Sector Handbook for the Communication between RUs/IMs v3.2
- Procedures for designing the annual timetable v1.0

3 Path Request System

For best results, it is strongly recommended that applicants use the Path Coordination System PCS (Internet-based communication system for the optimisation of international train path coordination)

² For the definition of 'multi-network impact' see Chapter 4.3.

for initial requests already. Any path modification can then be based on the complete information contained in PCS.

The PCS functionalities are described in the “PCS Documentation” (<https://rne.eu/it/rne-applications/pcs/documentation/>). Until the offer (in response to the modification request) is not provided by the IMs and accepted by the Applicants, the initially allocated international path remains active.

4 Path modification process description

4.1 List of involved stakeholders

Stakeholder	Definition
Initiating applicant	The applicant holding the rights to the allocated path and placing the path modification request.
Coordinating IM	The IM in charge of path allocation on the network where the initiating applicant holds the rights to the allocated path.
Affected IM(s)	Infrastructure manager(s) of the subsequent and preceding path sections, which are affected by the path modification triggered by the initiating applicant. In case of minor modification without multi-network impact, there will be no affected IMs.
Affected applicant(s)	The applicant(s) holding the rights to the subsequent and preceding sections of the allocated international path, which are affected by the path modification triggered by the initiating applicant. In case of minor modification without multi-network impact, there will be no affected applicants.
Lead IM <i>(only applicable if the initial request was placed in PCS)</i>	The active coordination role in the path modification process is overtaken by the coordinating IM. However, in PCS the lead IM (for the initial path request) remains in the dossier with the right to cancel the entire dossier once it reaches back the active timetable phase.

4.2 Submitting the path modification request

It is possible for applicants to place a path modification request any time after a path has been allocated, however, the processing time will depend on the scope of the request and on what types of timetable adjustments are applied by the IMs affected by the path modification request. For more details, see subchapters 4.6 and 4.7.

The applicant holding the rights to the allocated path and placing the path modification request becomes the initiating applicant. The initiating applicant always has the right to withdraw the modification request until the request is processed by the IMs³. The initiating applicant shall ensure that the modification request is harmonised over the complete train run. Before submitting the path modification request, the affected applicants (if involved) have to agree on the changes proposed by the Initiating applicant. At this stage, the applicants are provided with the possibility of pre-acceptance⁴. If this option is chosen by the applicant, there will be no explicit acceptance phase after the path elaboration.

³ Such withdrawal may be subject to a fee (“commercial conditions”), especially if it is sent at very short notice. Information on applicable fees is (to be) provided in the network statement.

⁴ This option is provided in PCS for all networks (before a dossier creation) and in national request methods of some IMs for their networks.

4.3 Construction and coordination of modification requests

As a first step, the evaluation of the multi-network impact shall be done by the coordinating IM only in case of major modifications⁵. The following definition shall be used for evaluation:

A multi-network impact as the result of the path modification process shall be expected if the agreed running days, border times, path number and or other parameters affecting timetable might be changed. A multi-network impact shall also be expected in a case that the modification would affect the operational concept to the extent that the applicant would have to request additional path modification in one of the subsequent networks (i.e. additional operational stop)⁶.

In case a multi-network impact is expected⁷ as the result of the path modification process, the coordinating IM has to inform all potentially involved stakeholders, especially, IMs of the subsequent and preceding path sections about the start of the process, and the estimated impact at the border(s). Next, the affected IM(s) has to evaluate if any of their neighbouring IMs are affected by the path modification request, and in case communicate the same information (start of the process and estimated impact at the border(s))⁸.

If no path modification request has already been submitted to the affected IM(s), then they may inform the relevant applicant. In the event that no modification request is submitted even after informing the relevant applicant, the request sent by the initiating applicant may not be feasible.

The first affected IM should be the first IM to provide the modified path. The second IM to provide a modified path is the affected IM responsible for the subsequent path section and so forth, unless a different order is agreed with all IM(s)

The IMs in the process of construction also need to take into account infrastructure availability and check it with their partners. Infrastructure availability may be reduced due to temporary capacity restrictions (TCRs). This work needs to be fully integrated into the process of harmonisation. Appropriate communication between IMs and applicants has to take place (e.g. alternative proposals).

In case of minor modification without multi-network impact, the coordinating IM is the only one involved in the processing of the request.

During the processing of the modification request, each IM has to inform the relevant applicant and all other IMs immediately as soon as it becomes aware that the modification requested is not feasible and no alternatives are possible. In this case, it will not be possible to provide a harmonised⁹ offer and, for this reason, the modification request will not be processed by the coordinating IM and the other IMs affected.

⁵ This is due to the fact that:

- The path modification request is harmonised over the complete train run AND
- A minor modification request has no impact on other paths. It means that applicant(s) can evaluate the exact multi-network impact before submitting the request.

⁶ It should be taken into consideration that a coordinating IM has only limited information on the applicants' operational concept. Therefore, this information should be provided by the initiating applicant.

⁷ The pre-evaluation of a multi-network impact should be triggered by the initiating applicant, which can inform the business partner. Nevertheless, in case of major modification, it is a final responsibility of IMs to decide whether they are affected or not.

⁸ If the initiating applicant placed the modification request in PCS, then the system shall send a notification to all affected stakeholders (as a result of the multi-network impact assessment initiated by the coordinating IM and subsequently also by the affected IM(s)).

⁹ Harmonised means that border times, train parameters and running days are agreed upon among the involved IMs.

4.4 Path offer

If the modification requested is not feasible and no alternatives are possible, it will be rejected and the originally allocated international path (on the running days affected by the modification request) remains unchanged (i.e., active and allocated) from origin to destination. Applicants should consider whether they wish to keep the original allocated path (on the running days affected by the modification request), or they prefer to cancel it (placing a cancellation request as in the relevant RNE Handbook) and place an ad hoc request (according to the relevant RNE Handbook).

If the modification requested is feasible, once the last IM in the chain of construction of the offer has provided his modified path section, it shall inform the coordinating IM that the harmonised and consistent offer is prepared for sending – with remarks if necessary. Remarks may consist of an indication regarding temporarily uncertain times depending on infrastructure availability (e.g., TCRs).¹⁰

Each IM shall inform the applicants and potentially affected IMs as soon as it becomes aware that a modified train path, offered (not yet allocated) to the applicant, is not available any longer due to some unforeseen circumstances. If possible, the IM will provide an alternative proposal otherwise the request will be recalled by the relevant IM.

4.5 Path acceptance/allocation

If all affected applicants agree with the modified path offer, the initiating applicant sends a formal acceptance notification; the original path is still active during the whole process until the end of path acceptance.¹¹

If any of the applicants disagree with the offer, it has the right to reject it; nevertheless, it has to indicate whether it is interested in an investigation of another alternative or that by the rejection the process of path modification ends. IMs will try to treat any corresponding remark as far as possible. If “No alternatives” are available and the request for an alternative offer is refused, however, the original path still remains active. The applicants should evaluate themselves whether they would like to keep the original path, or they prefer to cancel the allocated path and place a new request.

If the pre-acceptance has been selected by the Applicant, the path will be allocated immediately after placing the path offer.

4.6 Timeline for major modification requests

The process timeline for major/strong international path modification requests depends on the scope of the requests and on what type of timetable adjustment is used by the affected IMs.

It is highly recommended to submit the request by the internationally agreed editorial deadline associated to the internationally agreed yearly timetable update, which precedes the first running day when the modified path is desired. Only this timely submission guarantees that the path modification request is processed completely by all IMs of the train run.

¹⁰ Path modification in PCS: coordinating IM has to set up light on green. If there are other IMs affected, they have to set up their lights on green too. If all IM lights on green, coordinating IM has to submit path modification offer.

¹¹ A formal path allocation is a legal act. For the time being, this remains a national process and contracts are delivered IM by IM.

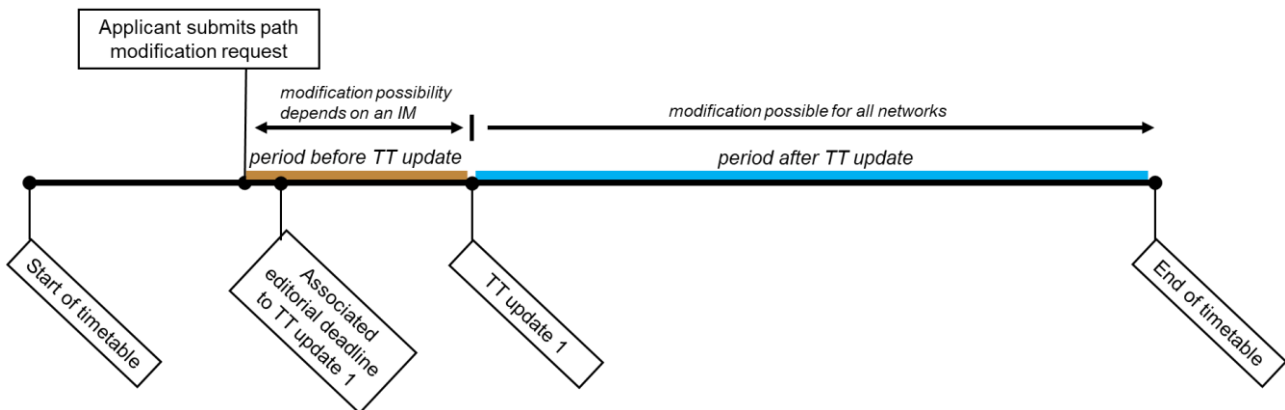
4.6.1. IMs applying internationally agreed timetable updates

Some of the IMs use internationally agreed timetable updates and editorial deadlines (as published in their network statements)¹². Yearly TT updates and editorial deadlines for each TT are coordinated under the umbrella of RailNetEurope and consulted with applicants in the respective working groups. They can be found published on RNE website: <https://rne.eu/downloads/>

For the sake of this handbook, the following definitions shall apply:

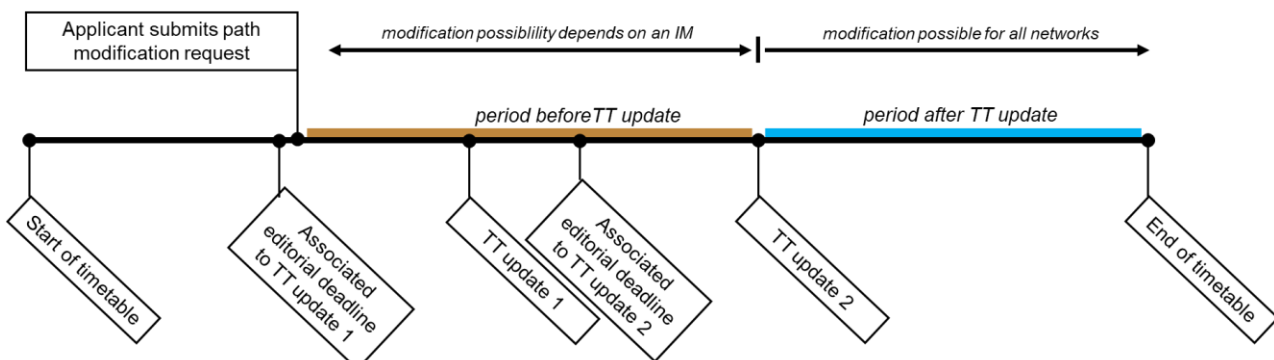
Yearly TT update: also called “updated TT publication day”. The day when the yearly timetable is updated and the modified paths requested before the associated editorial deadline are incorporated into the yearly timetable.

Path modification request (example 1)



Associated editorial deadline to the yearly TT update: the deadline until when all path modification requests shall be submitted, if the modified paths should be provided and incorporated into the yearly timetable with the next associated TT update (see example 1). In case that a request is placed after the editorial deadline, it will be incorporated only in the next but one TT update (see example 2 below) within the running TT.

Path modification request (example 2)



Request submission by applicants

Path modification requests for the running days after the next international TT update have to be submitted until the associated editorial deadline.

If a particular IM allows applicants to modify also the path for the running days before the next international yearly TT update, this process is described in the Network Statement.¹³

¹² The map of IMs using internationally agreed deadlines is provided as the annex C.

¹³ It should be taken into consideration that some of the IMs do not allow to place major/strong path modification requests for the period until the next TT update. The applicant in order to change the path shall cancel the allocated path and place a new request.

Response from IMs

The IMs shall send a harmonised path offer no later than 2 weeks before the TT update.

The offer can be provided in 5 calendar days only if the modification request has no impact on other paths and all affected IM(s) agree with this early submission.

Acceptance of an offer from applicants

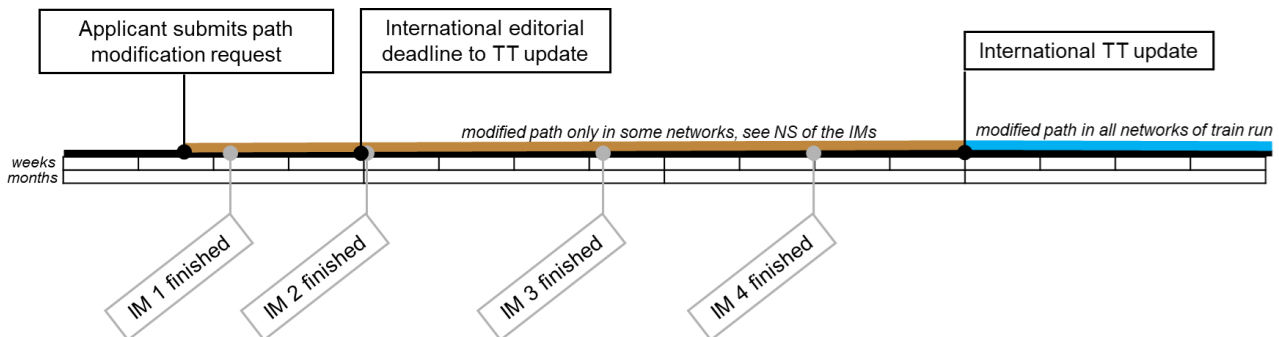
The applicants' acceptance has to be sent within 7 calendar days from receiving the modified path offer. If no response is provided by the applicants within 7 calendar days (or until the train run if the offer is sent less than 7 calendar days before operation), the original path remains unchanged (i.e., active and allocated).

4.6.2. IMs not applying internationally agreed timetable updates

The IMs not applying internationally agreed timetable updates either

- Apply own national fixed TT updates and editorial deadlines, which are more frequent and flexible than the internationally agreed timetable updates
- Apply dynamic TT updates, meaning the path modification is processed and the timetable updated at the latest n days after the path modification request is submitted

The method and process how to apply for a path modification in networks of these IMs are described in the Network Statement of each of the IM. However, it needs to be stressed out that these IMs process all path modification requests in a shorter period of time than those IMs applying internationally agreed editorial deadlines. Thus, if applicants submit a path modification request before the internationally agreed editorial deadline, all the IMs process the request on time before the yearly TT update (see examples of all process types below).



Example IM 1	Example IM 2	Example IM 3
<u>IM 1 applies own national fixed TT update</u>	<u>IM 2 applies dynamic TT updates</u>	<u>IM 3 applies internationally agreed TT updates</u>
The regular national TT updates are scheduled for every month. Editorial deadlines to these TT updates (processing time) are 2 weeks.	All Path modification requests have to be submitted 40 days before the first day when the modified path is desired. IM 3 updates TT on a daily basis for each modification request individually.	All path modification requests submitted before the internationally agreed editorial deadline are duly processed and answered for the running days after the associated TT update.
IM 1 always process the modification request before the international TT update	IM 2 always process the modification request before the international TT update	IM 3 always process the modification request before the international TT update.

Note: The deadlines in the table above are exemplary, for the process description see NS of IMs

In every case, applicants placing a major modification request before the internationally agreed editorial deadline will get a response and will be processed until the next internationally agreed TT update by all IMs.

Acceptance of an offer from applicants

As already described in chapter 4.6.1, the applicants' acceptance has to be sent within 7 calendar days from receiving the modified path offer. If no response is provided by the applicants within 7 calendar days (or until the train run if the offer is sent less than 7 calendar days before operation), the original path remains unchanged (i.e. active and allocated).

4.7 Timeline for minor modification requests

Minor modifications are those that do not have a substantial impact on its own and/or another path (e.g. decrease in train length with no impact on the timetable). For this reason, these modification requests may be incorporated into the yearly TT at any time.

Request submission by applicants

An applicant may place a minor modification request of an already allocated path at any time.

Response from IMs

The IMs shall send a path offer no later than 5 calendar days after the submission of the request.

Acceptance of an offer from applicants

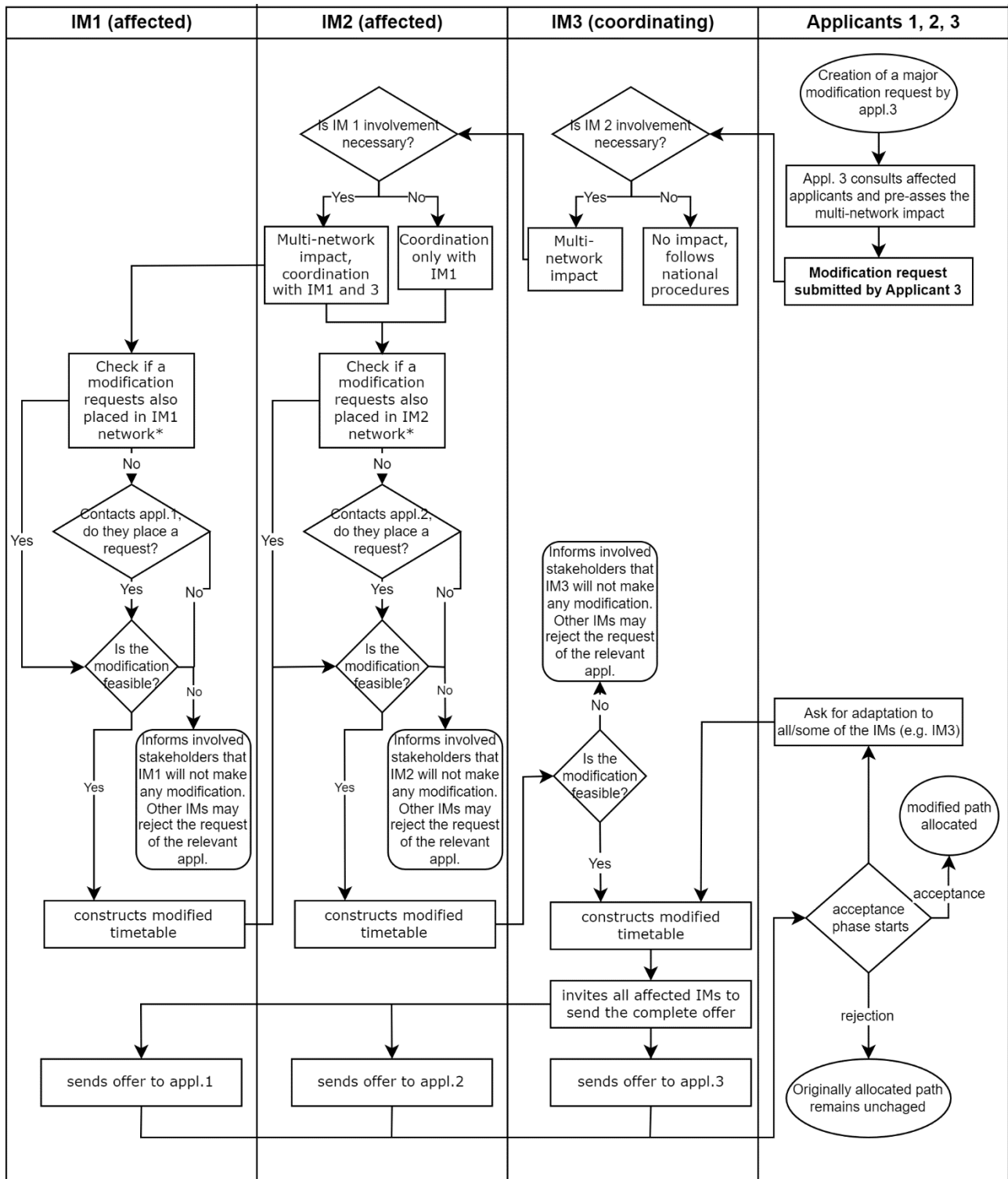
The applicants' acceptance has to be sent within 7 calendar days. If no response is provided by the applicants within 7 calendar days (or until the train run if the offer is sent less than 7 calendar days before operation), the original path remains unchanged (i.e., active and allocated).

Each Infrastructure Manager has set up specific contact points (One-Stop-Shop, or OSS) to ensure efficient handling of the international path requests.

Contact details: <http://www.rne.eu/organisation/oss-c-oss/>

Annex A – Diagram complementing chapter 4

The process diagram below displays a situation when a train runs over three networks in order IM1, IM2 and IM3. In each network a different applicant has been granted the right to use the path, i.e. applicant 1 in network of IM1 and so forth. A major modification request is placed by applicant 3, which operates the train in the last sequence of the international path.



Annex B – Minor/Major Modification of Allocated Paths

The table below shows the modification requests considered as “minor modification”. In all other cases, the request is considered a major modification.

Minor Modification Request	
Number of stops	
Fewer	Only if stopping time may be used as buffer time
Train parameters	
Length	Only if shorter than originally allocated
Weight	Only if lighter than originally allocated
Load profile (combined traffic)	Only if smaller or if it is bigger than originally allocated but still complies with the path parameters
Traction type	Only if it is a performance improvement or unchanged
Number of traction units	Only if fewer units and the performance is unchanged or improved
Change of operating partner RU ¹⁴	Only if the parameters are complied with
Replace scheduled rolling stock	Only if it complies with the originally scheduled rolling stock

¹⁴ Subject to Art.38(1) of Directive 2012/34/EU

Annex C – List of IMs applying internationally agreed TT updates and editorial deadlines

The following picture shows which IMs apply the internationally agreed TT updates and editorial deadlines in timetable 2023.

