



Procedures for Modification of International Path Request Management

Appendix to the RNE Process Handbook for International Path Allocation for
Infrastructure Managers

Version 1.0

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1. Introduction and scope of this document

This handbook describes the process by which applicants may modify allocated international paths. This activity is the so-called “**Modification of international path requests**” (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 should already be respected 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”.

2. Reference documents

This handbook follows the principles set down in the

- European Directive 2012/34/EU
- RNE Process Handbook for International Path Allocation

3. Path modification requests

3.1 Period and scope for placement of path modification requests

It is possible for applicants to place a path modification request any time after a path has been allocated but not later than a certain period prior to train run. This period is defined in the Network Statements.

Modifications that need to be communicated are described in every IM’s Network Statement and could be for example:

- Change of engine type with same performance
- reduction in the train length/weight
- operational stop changes to technical stop

It is then up to each IM to decide whether the modification requested impacts the allocated path or not within its own infrastructure. If the change does not impact the path, then the IM responds back to the Applicant that no change is necessary. If the modification of the path can be done as a result of the change then the IM offers the modified path back to the Applicant. If the modification of the change cannot be done by the IM, the Applicant is informed.

3.2 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) for initial requests already. Any path modification can be based on that complete information.

3.3 Submitting the path modification request

The PCS process is described in the “PCS Documentation” (<https://cms.rne.eu/pcs/pcs-documentation>). As long involved IMs/ABs have not provided a new path offer, the originally allocated path remains active.

3.4 Constructing and coordinating modification requests

Since modification requests may be placed individually by the applicants, the involvement of IMs depends on the scope of the request and the impact on the borders within the path to be modified. If several IMs are affected, the first affected IM of the train run must be the first to provide a modified path. When this step is done, the second IM on the train run provides a modified path, etc.

Each IM/AB must inform the applicant as soon as it becomes aware that a modified path is not available. If possible, the IM/AB will provide an alternative proposal.

The IMs/ABs 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/ABs and applicants must take place (e.g. alternative proposals).

3.5 Path offer

IMs/ABs harmonise the modified international path offer together by taking any necessary coordination initiatives.

Once the last IM/AB has provided its offer, the leading IM/AB is in charge of sending the harmonised and consistent offer – with remarks if necessary. Remarks may consist of an indication regarding temporarily uncertain times depending on infrastructure availability (TCRs). The modified path will be offered via PCS.

The path offers shall be placed as quickly as possible. The answering time will depend on the complexity and scope of the request.

3.6 Path acceptance

If all involved applicants agree with the modified path offer, the initiator applicant sends a formal acceptance notification, by using the relevant function in PCS. The applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible¹; the original path is still active during the whole process. If the Applicants do not agree with each other on the path offer, any corresponding remark will be treated as far as possible in the final answer. The IM/AB will propose an alternative; however, if “No alternatives” are available, the modification request becomes refused, and the original path remains active.

¹ Additional deadlines described in the Network Statement of each IM could be applied.

3.7 Path allocation/effect on original path

A formal path allocation is a legal act. For the time being, this will remain a national process and contracts will be delivered IM/AB by IM/AB. The allocation of modified requests is being done with immediate effect. However, due to the nature of the path modification, the original path may stay active:

- Until the acceptance of the modified path offer
- Until an agreed time, in which the original path will be replaced by the modified path

4. Transitional period

The Modification of International Path Requests Guidelines become effective immediately by the approval of the RNE General Assembly. IMs and ABs should adapt their internal processes and NS as soon as possible. The Path Coordination System PCS should be used for the modification process as described in chapter 3.2 in Timetable 2022 at the latest.

Each Infrastructure Manager/Allocation Body 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/>