

Frequently asked Questions

RISAS: the Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme

What is the “Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme”?

RISAS is a new scheme, designed to ensure that Railway Safety Case Duty Holders (Duty Holders), and other Customers such as ROSCOs, are able to rely upon common third party assessments, by Accredited Railway Industry Supplier Approval Bodies (RISABs).

The RISABs assess the adequacy of Suppliers' procedures, practices and competence to manage risks that arise from the specialist nature of railway industry applications (over and above any general ISO9000 type approvals).

What is RISAS for?

The aim of RISAS is to provide economies of scale to the railway industry by reducing duplication in auditing Suppliers of critical materials and services for the overhaul of assets and components, initially for train components and component / system modules.

What does RISAS apply to?

An initial list of RISAS critical materials and services has been developed where it is believed that economic efficiencies will be delivered. Suppliers can seek RISAS Approval for these Product Groups and customers can select RISAS Approved suppliers, entering into a specific contract for a particular material or service.

Where has RISAS come from?

*RISAS has been developed by a cross-industry engineering and procurement Core Working Group, supported by RSSB. The HSE has welcomed and encouraged the development and implementation of RISAS as a means of meeting **Cullen Recommendation 24**.*

How does RISAS fit in with existing supplier approval schemes?

RISAS is complementary, and not mandatory. It will develop gradually, as Suppliers gain RISAS Product group approval, and as Customers use RISAS to procure Critical Products with confidence, without the need to conduct their own supplier audits. It meets the requirements of ATOC ACOP 1003.

Who runs RISAS?

The formal status is described later, but in essence there is a Board that has cross industry representation and incorporates a member from, Suppliers, Customers, passenger and a non passenger member, ROSCOs, Network Rail, Infrastructure and RSSB.

Has RISAS been tested?

Yes, we have conducted pilot assessments on brakes equipment at two different overhaulers and with two different pilot RISABs during early 2006. A mini seminar was then held with all parties to review in-depth the issues raised.

How are the Assessors (RISABS) Selected and Accredited?

Interested parties apply to RSSB who review their application in rigorous detail to ensure that the in-depth 'people' expertise is available. The latter is important, as the assessment is not a tick box exercise but require assessors with knowledge.

What is 'the scope'?

This is the terms of reference and what is agreed with the supplier, before the assessment. This will be the basis for the assessment and if successful what the RISAS certificate will cover.

Who pays for RISAS?

The supplier pays for the assessment and becoming RISAS approved, with the price depending on the scope, while the RISAS system costs are borne by RSSB.

So one RISAS certificate will cover my company?

Not necessarily as it will only cover the items agreed in the scope and the site that is assessed.

How long will a RISAS certificate last?

For a first assessment it would be expected to be up to a year. Re-accreditation may be expected to up to 2 and possibly 3 years.

Will my previous 'history' be taken in to account?

It is part of the assessment that the NIR database is examined and previous audits reviewed by the assessor.

Is the RISAB assessment confidential?

Yes it is, although, the RISAS Board through its governance has the right to see the documents if necessary.

What happens if a supplier fails the Assessment?

If it is the initial assessment or a re-assessment there is an appeals procedure. If an extreme safety issue is identified and even after discussion with on-site senior management the issue remains, the RISAB will inform the RISAS Board. They will review and if necessary inform the industry safety case holders, to enable them to take the necessary actions.

So what about Sub-Suppliers?

Your processes and procedures will need to demonstrate to the assessors that their risks are controlled. One way for them to demonstrate this would be for them to have a RISAS certificate.

What about non-RISAS approved suppliers?

Similar to the above, with Duty holders still needing to assure that the suppliers are competent to supply.

So where do I find information about the scheme and status?

There is a web site: www.risas.co.uk

Where do PROOF and IRIS fit in to the picture?

Both are perceived as complementary. The PROOF scheme is predominately for non train items, while IRIS is a UNIFE initiative targeted at new trains / components. The latter was launched in Geneva on the 17th May 2006.

So what will RISAS do for me?

- *If you are a **supplier**, RISAS approval should save you time and effort in reducing the repeated audits going over the same ground, through one thorough assessment instead*
- *If you are a **customer**, you should be able to rely upon Products from RISAS approved Suppliers without the need to routinely undertake audits yourself. Of course, you must still monitor the products you get and you retain the right to audit*
- *If you are a **RISAB**, you should have the opportunity to do value-adding assessments, using procedures closely aligned to VAB or NoBo processes.*

What is the formal status of RISAS?

Four documents describing RISAS and its operational processes have been developed, and formal RSSB consultation undertaken and agreement reached.

- ***RISAS/001/01 Principles of the Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme*** – describes the scope and aims of the scheme, also outlines how it works
- ***RISAS/002/01 Arrangements for the Board of the Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme*** – describes how RISAS is governed i.e. by RISAS Board, elected by RSSB members and subject to RSSB Board.
- ***RISAS/003/01 Supplier Assessment Module*** – sets out in detail what suppliers need to do to become RISAS approved. Also gives a list of Product Groups (Materials and Services) to which RISAS is intended
- ***RISAS/004/01 Accreditation of Approval Bodies within the Railway Industry Supplier Approval Scheme*** – describes how the accreditation agency (RSSB) accredits RISABs

Copies of these documents are available on the RISAS IT application, and also on this CD-ROM.