



Statement of Strategy 2015- 2017

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1 Foreword

The Railway Safety Commission (RSC) is pleased to present this Statement of Strategy, which covers the three-year period 2015 to 2017. In undertaking its duties the Commission will be guided by this Statement of Strategy

The Commission is responsible for oversight of the safety of those railways that provide passenger and freight services or otherwise interface with the public. Regulation is performed in compliance with the provisions of the Railway Safety Act 2005 and the European Union (Railway Safety) Regulations 2013 (S.I. NO.444 of 2013).

Safety Authorisation for Iarnród Éireann's infrastructure manager functions and Safety Certification of Iarnród Éireann railway undertaking for its rail transport activities, was granted in conformity with European requirements in March 2013. Translink - Northern Ireland Railways (NIR), Balfour Beatty Rail Ireland (BBRI), and the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (RPSI) have also been awarded EU Safety Certification as Railway Undertakings to operate over the Iarnród Éireann network.

The Commission engages pro-actively with all railway sector participants to ensure that they meet their statutory obligations as duty holders with regard to safety of the travelling public, employees, and those who otherwise work on the railway.

The Commission is also responsible for the economic regulation of the sector in respect of the European railway network in the State in accordance with the provisions of the EU (Regulation of Railways) Regulations 2015 (S.I. No. 249 of 2015).

It is recognised that Government policies are shaped by the fiscal circumstance that pertain, and the Commission will respond to any challenges that emerge whilst at the same time ensuring that regulatory oversight of railway safety and market principles is not compromised.

The Railway Safety Commission is committed to a continuing delivery on its mission of ***“advancing railway safety, ensuring fair access to the Iarnród Éireann network, and monitoring the performance and sustainability of heavy rail infrastructure in Ireland.”***

Gerald Beesley
COMMISSIONER

June 2015

2 Introduction

This document is the triennial Statement of Strategy of the Railway Safety Commission (RSC) for the years 2015 to 2017. Its purpose is to present management, staff, stakeholders, and the public with a clear understanding of the strategic direction that the RSC is adopting to meet its statutory duties and achieve its business objectives.

The EU Railway Safety (Reporting of Serious Accidents, Accident and Incidents) Regulations of 2014 (S.I. No. 258 of 2014) provided for the activities of the Railway Accident Investigation Unit (RAIU) to be transferred from the RSC to the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport (DTTAS). This change came into effect on 1st July 2014, thus relieving the RSC of that specific area of responsibility. However, additional functions for regulation of the railway sector were conferred on the RSC under S.I. No. 249 of 2015 - the EU (Regulation of Railways) Regulations 2015. This Statement of Strategy takes account of these particular organisational changes.

2.1 Mission

In recognition of additional responsibilities for the regulation of railways conferred on the RSC under S.I. No.249 of 2015, the RSC has adopted a revised Mission Statement:-

The RSC is committed to advancing railway safety, ensuring fair access to the Iarnród Éireann network, and monitoring the performance and sustainability of heavy rail infrastructure in Ireland

Our Vision is:

Railways that safely deliver

Our Policy is:

To engage with all railway sector participants in a consistent, informed, and professional manner.

Our Objectives are:

Safety: that railway activities throughout the State are conducted with primary regard to safety;

Compliance: that railway organisations comply with national and European legal requirements;

Open Access: that access to the railway network is provided in a fair and transparent manner; and

Performance & Sustainability: that Infrastructure Manager(s) deliver sustainable railway network capacity and economic value for the State.

2.2 Legal Status

The Railway Safety Commission (RSC) is a statutory body that was established on 1st January 2006 in accordance with the provisions of the Railway Safety Act, 2005. It is the independent regulatory agency charged with oversight of all railway activities in the State.

In the context of Directive 2004/49/EC (the Railway Safety Directive), the RSC is the National Safety Authority for the railway sector in the Republic of Ireland. In order to meet the State's obligations under Directive 2012/34/EU (the Single European Railway Area Directive) the RSC was designated as the Regulatory Body and the Licensing Authority for the European railway system in the State, and also appointed the Independent Monitoring Body for the multi-annual Infrastructure Manager Contact, with effect from 12th June 2015.

2.2.1 Legal Competence

Under the provisions of the Railway Safety Act as amended by the EU (Railway Safety) Regulations 2013 (S.I. No.444 of 2013), and the EU (Regulation of Railways) Regulations 2015 (S.I. No. 249 of 2015) the RSC is the Competent Authority responsible for:

1. Conformity Assessment of Safety Management Systems and the associated safety authorisation of Infrastructure Managers and safety certification of Railway Undertakings in compliance with Directive 2004/49/EC and Regulations (EU) No.1158/2010 and (EU) No.1169/2010;
2. Conformity Assessment of Safety Management Systems and the associated safety certification of Light Railway Organisations and Heritage Railways in compliance with the Railway Safety Act;
3. Safety Assessment of new and significantly altered railway vehicles and structural sub-systems in compliance with requirements of Directive 2008/57/EC prior to authorisation to place in service;
4. Safety Assessment of new and significantly altered light railway vehicles and infrastructure in compliance with the requirements of the Railway Safety Act 2005;
5. Safety Supervision of Infrastructure Managers and Railway Undertakings in compliance with Directive 2004/49/EC and Regulation (EU) No.1177/2012, and of Light Railway Organisations and Heritage Railways in compliance with the Railway Safety Act 2005;
6. Certification and surveillance supervision of Entities in Charge of Maintenance in compliance with Regulation (EU) No.445/2011;
7. Licensing of train drivers in compliance with Directive 2007/59/EC and S.I. No.399 of 2010;
8. Monitoring the performance of the Iarnród Éireann Infrastructure Manager under the terms of the multi-annual Infrastructure Manager Contract between the Minister for Transport Tourism and Sport and Iarnród Éireann in compliance with Directive 2012/34/EU and S.I. No.249 of 2015;
9. Oversight of the Iarnród Éireann track access allocation and pricing regime and adjudication on appeals by Railway Undertakings in compliance with Directive 2012/34/EU;
10. Licensing of Railway Undertakings in compliance with Directive 2012/34/EU;
11. Promoting and developing the railway regulatory framework in accordance with Directive 2004/49/EC and Directive 2012/34/EU; and
12. Application of enforcement measures in accordance with Part 7 of the Railway Safety Act 2005.

The RSC is also the Competent Authority responsible for:

13. Certification of Advisors for carriage of dangerous goods on rail in compliance with S.I. 651 of 2010; and
14. Authorisation of cableways in compliance with S.I. 470 of 2003 (as amended by S.I. 766 of 2007).

The RSC is independent in its organisation, legal structure, and decision-making from any Railway Undertaking, Infrastructure Manager, and railway procurement entity. Furthermore, the tasks with which it is entrusted may not be transferred or sub-contracted to any Infrastructure Manager, Railway Undertaking or railway procurement entity.

In accordance with the requirements of the Directive 2004/49/EC, the RSC is free to carry out all inspections and investigations that are needed for accomplishment of its tasks and is granted access to all relevant documents and to premises, installations and equipment of Infrastructure Managers and Railway Undertakings and other railway organisations. These measures are given legal force by the powers of enforcement conferred by Section 76 of the Railway Safety Act, 2005.

3 Business Environment

This section describes the functional, corporate, and statutory responsibilities that shape the RSC's strategic direction. It also outlines those domestic and international relationships that determine the scope of activities that the RSC must be capable of handling in order to fully deliver on its regulatory duty in respect of the railway sector in Ireland.

Railway safety, particularly when it involves the transport of passengers, is a public interest issue, and it is therefore not only a political imperative to establish the necessary legislative framework, but also to ensure that capacity for adequate regulatory oversight is not impaired by other priorities.

The objective of the RSC's human resource strategy is to build and maintain a competent corporate capability for the regulation of the railway sector. This strategy is designed to ensure that a cadre of professional staff, with railway-specific technical knowledge and experience, is available to meet the business needs of the organisation.

3.1 Functional Responsibilities

As the independent regulatory agency charged with oversight of all railway activities in the State, the RSC is required to ensure that each railway organisation operating within the State understands and effectively manages the risk to safety associated with its activities.

The RSC is also required to ensure that the European railway network in the State is maintained to the standard required to deliver sustainable infrastructure capacity and economic value; that access to that network is provided in a fair and transparent manner; and that those Railway Undertakings accessing the network satisfy the EU licensing requirements.

The foregoing is achieved through four key business processes, viz.:

Conformity Assessment - Assessing Safety Management Systems (SMS) to ensure that they conform to all requirements prior to awarding Safety Authorisation or Safety Certificates, and assessment of new or significantly altered railway infrastructure and rolling stock to ensure safety compliance prior to authorising placement in service;

Supervision & Enforcement – Auditing railway organisations' compliance with the procedures and standards prescribed in their respective SMS, and inspection of railway assets to assess compliance with fitness for purpose criteria. Compliance with safety recommendations is assured through monitoring of implementation plans and by taking enforcement proceedings where necessary;

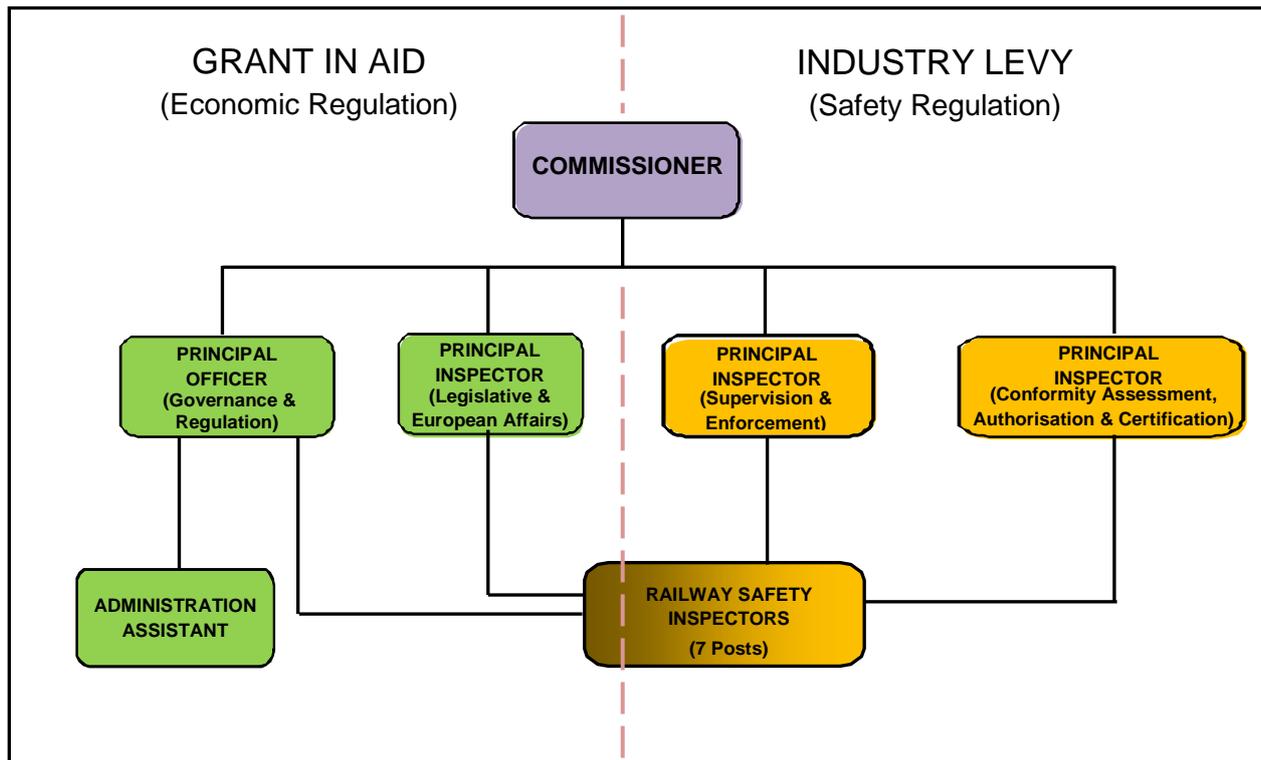
Economic Regulation – Monitoring the performance of Iarnród Éireann under the terms of the multi-annual infrastructure contract between the Minister for Transport Tourism and Sport and the Infrastructure Manager in regard to expenditure, maintenance output, and service delivery; oversight of the Iarnród Éireann track access allocation and pricing regime and adjudication on appeals by Railway Undertakings; and the licensing of Railway Undertakings;

European & Legislative Harmonisation – Supporting the harmonisation of legislation with European Directives and Regulations, and ensuring that the consequent implementation of related technical and procedural measures conforms to mandatory European requirements.

EU Common Safety Methods (CSMs) dictate the precise manner in which Infrastructure Managers and Railway Undertakings are to be supervised to ensure that they apply and comply with their respective approved SMS. Similarly, the process for authorising the placing in service of new and significantly altered railway vehicles and structural sub-systems is laid down by Europe, as are the requirements for ensuring SMS conformity.

3.1.1 Human Resources

The RSC has identified the organisational structure and staff requirements necessary to deliver on its functional obligations outlined above, and this is illustrated by the following diagram:



Technical specialists possessing a very broad knowledge of the railway industry are required for the Inspector positions within the RSC - narrowly focussed experts are not suitable for such roles. In the past recruitment of experienced railway engineers with such qualities proved quite problematic for the RSC. To overcome this difficulty a bespoke graduate development programme was developed in collaboration with Engineers Ireland as a key component of the RSC human resource strategy. This strategy of growing our own expertise was implemented in September 2011, and continues to this day. It has provided the means of ensuring that adequate railway-specific technical knowledge and experience is now available to meet the business needs of the organisation.

Prior to the development of our own capability the RSC was overly dependent on of consultant specialists engaged under framework arrangements as means of resourcing its on-going functions. However, such contract arrangements were far from satisfactory in that their administration demanded a disproportionate amount of management resource, and they did not satisfy the fundamental RSC need to develop and retain knowledge.

3.1.2 Continuous Professional Development

Regulation of railway safety can only be effectively carried out by technical specialists - professional railway engineers with appropriate experience in the sector. In particular, it is necessary for the RSC to have in-house expertise in the areas of track and structures, traction and rolling stock, railway electrification, signalling, and train working.

The RSC staff development programme is designed to equip graduate engineers with the necessary skills, ability, knowledge, and experience to satisfy the railway safety inspector competency requirements. The RSC continuous professional development (CPD) policy provides for career progression within the organisation, and is based on the levels of qualification and experience expected for each grade of railway safety Inspector. It also takes account of the need to develop added skills in the areas of railway economics, human factors, and risk assessment.

3.1.3 Effective Regulation

Events in the recent past have demonstrated that 'light touch' regulation is an inadequate approach for many sectors of the national economy, and this is equally true when it comes to railway safety. Since late 2010 the RSC has embraced a 'right touch' philosophy in the regulation of railway safety. This strategy involves a 'hands on' approach that focuses on a railway organisation's application of and compliance with its SMS, upon which Safety Authorisation / Safety Certification has been granted.

This is a rigorous process as the SMS regime is designed to ensure that the risk of a chain of unanticipated errors and misunderstood events, which could lead to a catastrophic event, can be prevented at the earliest opportunity.

3.1.4 Quality Management System

The RSC has adopted a strategy of achieving ISO accreditation to guarantee consistent methods of conformity assessment and inspection throughout the organisation. This requires documentation of all processes from the highest to the lowest level. The documentation process is described in the Business Operating Manual, which also defines the methods of carrying out work and gives repeatable direction to all official RSC activities. ISO accreditation will ensure that standardisation and consistency of RSC processes and procedures are guaranteed through internal quality monitoring and audit combined with external review by the national accreditation body.

3.2 Corporate Responsibilities

The RSC aims to be informed, innovative, efficient and cost-effective. The flat reporting structure promotes and facilitates free-flow of information and ideas, encouraging consultation and creative thinking. Not only does this enable the RSC to meet the requirements of the work programme set out in its business plan, but it also provides the flexibility needed to respond effectively to immediate and unforeseen work demands arising from the sector.

3.2.1 Corporate Governance

RSC corporate governance policy is guided by the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, as published by the Department of Finance. This ensures that the systems and procedures by which the organisation is directed and controlled are in accordance with good practice.

3.2.2 Code of Conduct

The RSC has in operation a Code of Business Conduct, which includes employee’s duty, avoidance of conflict of interest, limits on external activities, rules regarding the acceptance of gifts, etc. This Code of Conduct applies to the Commissioner and all employees of the RSC. In addition, all professional engineering staff are required to abide by the Institution of Engineers of Ireland Code of Ethics.

3.2.3 Financial Management

Under both EU and national legislation, the RSC is charged with delivering regulatory services in an open and transparent manner. The RSC is committed to maintaining appropriate and effective financial management controls. RSC annual accounts are subject to internal audit by independent auditors and also to an external audit by the Comptroller & Auditor General.

RSC revenue is a combination of Grant from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, and a Safety Levy that is imposed on railway sector participants by means of a Statutory Instrument that is published on an annual basis. The greater part of the Grant is used to fund the economic regulatory activities, but the safety regulatory activities of the RSC are financed through the Safety Levy.

3.2.4 Risk Management

The RSC *Procedure for Management of Business Risk* ensures that foreseeable risks to the business are identified, assessed, and that the level of risk is controlled to a tolerable level by effective measures that cannot be bettered without incurring disproportionate expenditure. The RSC risk register is a ‘live’ document that is subject to formal review on an annual basis, so as to ensure that risks identified are not exceeding the specified upper boundary criteria for exposure.

The most significant risk to RSC business continuity is that posed by a loss of experienced staff. The age profile of the RSC staff, as illustrated in the table below, is such that in itself it does not pose an unmanageable risk to the resource requirements.

Age Range	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60+
No. of staff	4	2	4	2	1

However, economic growth in the domestic economy, and worldwide demand for specialist railway knowledge and experience, present on-going risks to resource retention for the RSC. The mitigation measure that are now in place, as per the strategy described in sub-section 3.1.1, provides a ready source of suitable trained professionals to counteract the effects of staff turnover.

3.3 Statutory Responsibilities

3.3.1 Health & Safety at Work

The RSC is bound by the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act, 2005, and Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007. Workplace risk is continually monitored and the RSC Safety Statement is regularly updated accordingly. Where training needs are identified, the RSC arranges provision of the same to ensure compliance with best practice.

Specific to the rail industry, RSC personnel have been trained in the procedures for Personal Track Safety and certification is always maintained in date. Where necessary, the requirements for Safe Pass certification have also been met.

3.3.2 Data Protection

As a data controller, the RSC is fully committed to comply with the Data Protection Act 1988 (as amended). The EU Driver Licensing Regulations involve the maintenance of personal data, and the RSC also holds private information on persons who have been interviewed during audits carried out in relation to Safety Management System compliance.

3.3.3 Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act, 2014, asserts the rights of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible, consistent with public interest and the right to privacy of individuals.

In regard to its role under the Railway Safety Act 2005 the RSC, as a law enforcement agency, may take evidence under oath in the pursuit of a prosecution. The RSC shall ensure that any responses to information requests do not inhibit law enforcement or introduce any risk to due process.

During the exercise of its functions the RSC inevitably becomes aware of a considerable amount of business information pertaining to the sector participants. In accordance with the provisions of the RSA, the RSC will always endeavour to ensure that responses to information requests do not disclose commercially sensitive data, particularly where it relates to competitive rail market participants.

3.3.4 Irish and European Languages

The RSC complies with the relevant parts of the Official Languages Act 2003, and official publications such as Annual Reports and Statements of Strategy are produced in both Irish and English. It is the policy of the RSC to maintain an Irish language capability so that queries can be responded to in either the Irish or English languages.

As the procedural languages in use by the European Railway Agency (ERA) are English, French and German, the RSC encourages the development of linguistic diversity to facilitate communication with the national safety authorities of the EU Member States.

3.4 Domestic Relationships

Working relationships exist with domestic stakeholders comprising Government departments; State agencies; railway Infrastructure Managers; Railway Undertakings; other railway organisations, the travelling public; and those whose activities can otherwise affect railway safety.

3.4.1 Government Departments and State Agencies

Although the RSC operates an independent regulatory body, a practical working relationship must be maintained with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. This is important in the context of harmonisation of legislation with emerging European requirements and the technical application of the same to the railway sector in Ireland. There is also on-going engagement with the Department in regard to progress with deliverables under the Multi-Annual Contract between the Minister and the Iarnród Éireann Infrastructure Manager.

While the RSC has primary responsibility for the enforcement of the Railway Safety Act 2005, the European Union (Railway Safety) Regulations 2013, and the EU (Regulation of Railways) Regulations 2015, it is appropriate to liaise with other State agencies and law enforcement agencies in carrying out this duty. In this regard the RSC has established a memorandum of understanding with the Health & Safety Authority. The RSC also co-operates with:

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)
- The National Transport Authority (NTA)
- The Road Safety Authority (RSA)
- An Garda Síochána
- The Railway Accident Investigation Unit (RAIU)
- The Emergency Services
- The Coroner Service

Road-Rail Interfaces

The Road Rail Safety Working Group (RRSWG) is chaired by the RSC, and representation includes the Department of Transport Tourism & Sport, railway organisations, road authorities, road hauliers and the Gardaí. In addition to meeting annually, the group will continue to host awareness meetings around the country to communicate with engineers and managers from the local authorities regarding road rail interfaces, and to discuss particular areas of concern at the locations visited.

User-worked level crossings on public roads present a particular risk area that continues to be of concern. The RSC will continue to encourage investment through the relevant channels aimed at mitigation of risks associated with such level crossings.

3.4.2 Infrastructure Managers, Railway Undertakings, and other Railway Organisations

Currently, there is only one railway Infrastructure Manager in the State – Iarnród Éireann – which has been granted a Safety Authorisation in accordance with the requirements of the Railway Safety Directive.

At present, there are four Railway Undertakings that have been issued with Safety Certificates in compliance with Regulation EC 653/2007 and the Railway Safety Directive, which permits them to operate on the Iarnród Éireann network:

- Iarnród Éireann (IÉ), which operates Inter-city; regional and commuter services, including the DART electrified commuter service in the greater Dublin area;
- Translink - Northern Ireland Railways (NIR), which operates the *Enterprise* inter-city service between Dublin and Belfast jointly with Iarnród Éireann;
- Balfour Beatty Rail Ireland (BBRI) who conduct movements on the network in conjunction with infrastructure maintenance activities; and
- The Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (RPSI), which operates occasional steam and diesel hauled heritage trains.

The LUAS Light Rail network in Dublin and extensions thereto are also subject to regulatory oversight by the RSC. The RSC has extended the application of safety management principles to Light Railway Organisations, and Transdev Dublin Light Rail Ltd. were granted a new Safety Certificate under these revised requirements on 13th March 2015.

In addition, there are five narrow-gauge Heritage Railways operating on their own self-contained infrastructure. The safety certification process for these railways is based on the acceptance of a SMS as defined in specific RSC Guidance documents. Heritage Railways that are currently covered by Safety Certificates issued in accordance with these requirements are:

- Diffilin Lake Railway, Raphoe, Co. Donegal
- Fintown Railway, Fintown, Co. Donegal
- Irish Steam Preservation Society, Stradbally, Co. Laois
- Lartigue Monorailway, Listowel, Co. Kerry
- Waterford & Suir Valley Railway, Kilmeadan, Co. Waterford

There are three other self-contained Heritage Railways that are currently non-operational as they have yet to achieve Safety Certification:

- Cavan & Leitrim Railway, Dromod, Co. Leitrim
- Tralee & Blennerville Railway, Tralee, Co. Kerry
- West Clare Railway, Moyasta, Co. Clare

In view of their contribution to the tourism sector, the RSC is committed to encouraging the heritage railways and will continue to ensure that they offer a safe recreational experience for visitors and volunteers alike.

The self-contained Heritage Railways are also subject to supervision by the RSC as are industrial railway interfaces with public roadways. Currently there is only one organisation that meets this latter criteria; Bord na Móna who operates an extensive network of narrow-gauge industrial railways across the boglands.

3.4.3 Railway Safety Advisory Council

The Railway Safety Advisory Council was established under the terms of the Railway Safety Act, 2005 to provide a forum for the various stakeholder organisations. It is independent of the RSC and may present the Minister for Transport Tourism & Sport or the RSC with recommendations in regard to railway safety matters. The RSC is strongly committed to supporting this body and appreciates the independent perspective that it brings to railway safety matters.

3.5 International Relationships

3.5.1 Northern Ireland and Great Britain

The RSC maintains liaison with the relevant authorities involved with railway regulation in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. In relation to Dublin-Belfast cross-border rail services, the RSC is committed to work closely with the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport and the Department of Regional Development in Northern Ireland (DRDNI). Co-operation in safety regulation is covered by a Memorandum of Understanding that is in place between the RSC and DRDNI. Although the networks North and South are constructed to the same track gauge (1,600mm), there are several differences in legislation, practices, specifications, equipment and infrastructure that have to be considered in promoting rail interoperability between the two jurisdictions.

In line with regional co-operation strategies, the RSC is committed to participation at various fora in relation to the cross-border railway operations. Depending on the subject matter under discussion, participants may include representatives from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, the Department of Regional Development in Northern Ireland, the Department for Transport (U.K.), the Office of Rail and Road (the independent safety and economic regulator for Britain's railways); Iarnród Éireann and Translink (Northern Ireland Railways).

3.5.2 Europe

Within the context of the European Union (EU) the RSC engages with the European Railway Agency and the national safety authorities of other Member States in the development and implementation of a harmonised approach to the regulation of railways. The regulatory framework is governed by EU Directives on the single European railway area and, in particular safety, interoperability, licensing of train drivers, and certification of entities in charge of maintenance. The regulatory framework is aimed at promoting efficiency and market competition, and facilitating the mobility of labour.

The RSC is also a member of the International Liaison Group of Government Railway Inspectorates (ILGGRI) and actively participates in the exchange of information and views at meetings of this pan-European group. In association with the Department for Transport, Tourism & Sport the RSC attends and participates in meetings of the Railway Interoperability and Safety Committee (RISC) of the European Commission.

Continued participation in the development and implementation of the European railway regulatory framework is a key component of RSC strategy, and closer co-operation with European counterparts is an on-going objective. To that end, the RSC participates in a programme of exchange of experts with the Netherlands, UK, and Switzerland.

3.5.3 Worldwide

The regulation of railway safety is a worldwide activity and, in addition to the Member States of the European Union, the RSC maintains active contact with regulators in many countries, including Switzerland, Australia and Canada. The RSC has been a member of the core group of the International Railway Safety Council (IRSC) since 2006, and continued participation at the annual conference is a strategy that yields considerable benefit for the RSC through networking and exposure to wider perspectives on railway safety.

4 Strategic Objectives and Priorities

The top objective for the RSC is to ensure that adequate railway-specific technical knowledge and experience is available within the organisation to meet its on-going business needs. A strategy of bespoke human resource development has been adopted and this has delivered the objective of minimising dependency on external specialist resources.

The RSC is working with the railway sector participants to develop a better understanding of the importance of knowledge management and the significant role that human behaviour plays in contributing to risk. The objective is to foster and encourage the adoption of 'just culture' and 'organisational learning' principles to improve the control of risk at the person-technology interface. This is in-line with the approach being adopted by the European Railway Agency (an approach that has already been implemented for the aviation sector by European Aviation Safety Agency). The RSC is committed to encouraging railway organisations to incorporate the safety management principles of other High Reliability Organisations (HROs) into railway operations and maintenance.

The broadening of the RSC's remit to include economic regulation has presented an opportunity to review the organisation's approach to quality management. The RSC is committed to implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) that will satisfy the requirements for ISO accreditation of its conformity assessment, audit and inspection processes.

The RSC is ever conscious of the need to deliver value for money and minimise dependence on State Grants. With these objectives in mind a strategy has been developed for working towards least dependence on central funding whilst maintaining industry safety levies at current levels. However, it is important to ensure that the impartiality of regulatory decision-making is not subject to undue influence by the regulated entities.

5 Performance Monitoring

The basis of monitoring regulatory performance, particularly where safety is concerned, is not simple. A multitude of factors can influence the workload of the RSC including, *inter alia*, changing risk profiles of the sector participants as a result of internal and external influences, the random nature of capital investment projects, developments in the European framework for the regulation of the railway sector, etc. However, there are a number of key performance indicators that are used to monitor RSC performance.

Activities of the national (railway) safety authorities are prescribed in the Railway Safety Directive and precise methods for their execution are laid down in Regulations made under the Directive. The RSC is subject to cross-audit by the European Railway Agency to monitor compliance with these requirements.

Regulation (EU) No. 1177/2012 requires that application and compliance with all elements of the SMS of Infrastructure Manager and Railway Undertakings are audited over the validity period of their respective Safety Authorisation and Safety Certification. The RSC Supervision Programme has been developed to meet this requirement and delivery is monitored on an on-going basis.

Budgets, based on work programme requirements, are set on an annual basis, and work activity and expenditure are monitored on a monthly basis. RSC annual accounts are subject to internal audit by independent auditors and also to an external audit by the Comptroller & Auditor General.