



# Principles of the Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme

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## Part A

### Issue record

This document will be updated when necessary by distribution of a complete replacement.

Issue	Date	Comments
1	January 2013	First issue
1.1	September 2013	Logo updated, Hyperlinks added
1.2	December 2015	Logo and address Updated
1.3	March 2019	Logo change

### Technical content

This document has been approved by the RSSB Board on 10 January 2013.

Suggestions to improve the contents of this document should be directed to the Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme (RISQS) Board at the following address:

RISQS Board  
RSSB,  
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1 South Place,  
London,  
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### Application

A member of the railway industry, as defined in this document, may choose to adopt RISQS through company procedures or contract conditions, as one part of its overall assurance arrangements, in the management of supply chain risk. Where this is the case the member shall specify the nature and extent of application.

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### Supply

Copies of this document may be obtained from:

RISQS Board,  
RSSB,  
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Or from the RISQS website [www.risqs.org](http://www.risqs.org)

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### Definitions

Definitions of the terms used throughout the RISQS documents are set out in Appendix A.

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## References / Related Documents

References / Related documents are set out in Appendix B.

## Part B

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document describes the governance and main principles of the Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme (RISQS).
- 1.2 RISQS has been developed from the GB rail industry's Link-up scheme to provide a fair, open and transparent third party qualification process, with the aim of becoming the preferred route for suppliers to engage with their customers, in an efficient and effective manner.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 The long standing Link-up scheme was founded on good practice established by British Rail in the early 1990's to meet the requirements of the Contracts Utilities Regulations and has evolved over time with the aim of providing additional benefits to both customers and suppliers including verification of the qualification questionnaire through audit.

RISQS is the culmination of an industry led improvement project to the Link-up scheme to deliver the following:

- Adoption of the new Rail Industry Commodity Classification List (RICCL)
- Rationalisation of supplier qualification information requirements
- Streamline the audit activity both in terms of scope and depth
- Enhancement of qualification arrangements to embrace sustainable development
- New IT platform to support the more effective operation of the scheme

- 2.2 This Vision has been developed for the RISQS:

**Universally recognised as the most effective and efficient method and preferred route for suppliers to engage with the GB rail industry**

### 3 Scheme governance and principles

- 3.1 RISQS is a scheme managed "by the industry for the industry" and provides a service for the universal qualification of suppliers of all products and services that are procured by the industry. RISQS supports Network Rail, LUL/Transport for London, passenger, light rail and freight train operators, rolling stock organisations, main infrastructure contractors and other rail products and services providers in the management of supply chain risk. It provides an independent, third party qualification assessment of a supplier's capability to supply products and services.

It should be noted that the industry also employs other schemes and arrangements to help secure supplier assurance such as the Rail Industry Supplier Approval Scheme (RISAS) and the International Rail Industry Standard (IRIS). The governance arrangements set out in this document are designed to facilitate the efficient specification and operation of RISQS with these other schemes.

- 3.2 The governance and principles set out in the document aim to secure the following:

- Separation of governance from service provision
- Control by the rail industry of the specification and delivery of its own scheme
- Creation of robust governance and scheme provision arrangements which are compatible with international standards for accreditation and conformance certification

- 3.3 RISQS 'adds value' to both the customers and suppliers and to this end, the following scheme objectives have been set to meet the current and future needs of the rail industry:

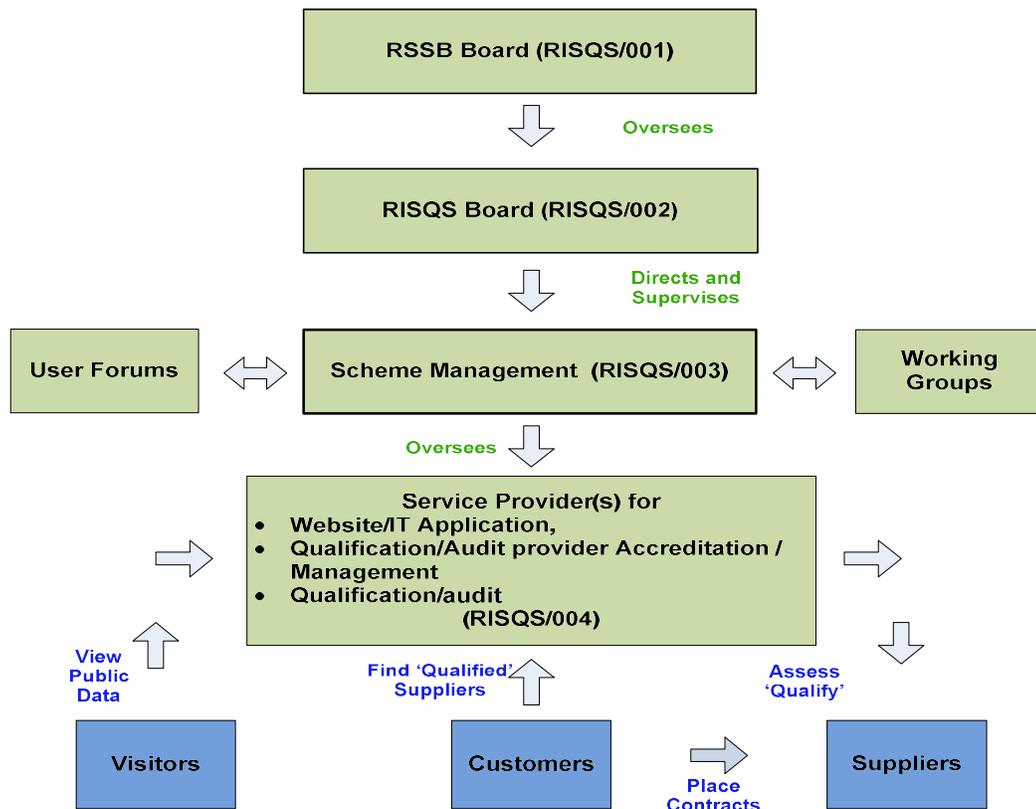
- Provide an entry route for suppliers wishing to pre-qualify to supply to the GB rail industry

- Provide a “Buying Tool” for the industry and assist with EU procurement compliance
- Help to inform suppliers of legal / safety / quality requirements
- Reduce duplication of supplier assessment thereby reducing cost
- Provide appropriate assurance regarding management systems and corporate legitimacy
- Act as an industry feedback tool to help improve performance

**3.4** RISQS requires suppliers to undergo a thorough qualification assessment process to verify that they have the management capability to meet customer requirements. The RISQS Board are responsible for appointing service provider(s) to plan and undertake the qualification assessment to verify that a supplier meets the qualification criteria specified in the scheme documentation. The Board may also appoint an accrediting agent to accredit potential service provider(s). Following a successful assessment, the supplier will be notified of their qualification including details of the duration and scope of qualification. Details of qualified suppliers are available on the RISQS website.

**3.5 Governance and general arrangements**

The diagram below illustrates the governance and operating arrangements for the RISQS and supporting explanation is provided in the following paragraphs.



**3.6 Supporting documentation for the scheme**

The following documents contain the more detailed arrangements for governance, management and delivery of the scheme.

- [RISQS/002 Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme Board Arrangements](#)
- [RISQS/003 Operation and Management of the Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme](#)
- [RISQS/004 Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme Requirements](#)

### 3.7 RSSB Board

The RSSB Board acts as the custodian of the scheme. It has delegated the responsibility for direction and supervision of RISQS to the RISQS Board, subject to certain constraints. These are that the RISQS Board shall seek approval from the RSSB Board for:

- Any expansion in the scope of RISQS and / or the RISQS activities
- Any decision proposed to be taken by RISQS Board that would or may have a material effect on RSSB's liabilities
- Any changes to this document about the governance and principles of the RISQS
- Appointment / change of RISQS scheme manager as appropriate
- Material changes to scheme funding model

Additionally:

- RSSB shall provide the agreed resources to support these new governance arrangements including secretarial/administrative support for the RISQS Board
- RSSB shall provide insurance cover for RISQS Board members when conducting RISQS business on the understanding that liabilities are limited to the functioning of the RISQS Board and not the operation of the scheme itself

If the RSSB Board considers that the RISQS Board or the scheme is failing in a material way to meet the requirements of RISQS or the RISQS Board is taking, or failing to take, decisions which might have a material effect on RSSB's liabilities without having sought proper approval from the RSSB Board, then the RSSB Board may do the following:

- Encourage the RISQS Board to take appropriate action
- Draw the issue to the attention of RSSB members
- Review the membership of the RISQS Board and require the replacement of one or all of the RISQS Board members

### 3.8 RISQS Board

The arrangements for the membership, operation and governance of the RISQS Board are set out in [RISQS/002](#). The RISQS Board appoints its own Chairman and Deputy.

The RISQS Board will be responsible for:

- The effective management of the scheme, including the appointment and performance of the accrediting agent and scheme provider(s)
- Specification, review and update of scheme documentation
- Considering appeals and responding to performance issues
- Development and delivery of the business plan for RISQS, including objectives for each financial year
- Securing suitable accreditation for the scheme
- Production of an annual scheme stewardship report to the RSSB Board
- Responding to requests from the RSSB Board

### 3.9 Scheme operation and management

The arrangements for the operation and management of the scheme are set out in [RISQS/003](#).

These arrangements include:

- Scheme policies, rules and procedures
- Development of business plan
- Scheme operational management, including delivery performance of service provider(s)
- Specification and procurement of future service provider(s)
- Management of the appeals process
- Establishment of user forums, working groups and projects

The RISQS Board may appoint a scheme manager to help discharge its responsibilities.

### 3.10 Accrediting agent and service provider(s)

The arrangements for the specification and delivery of scheme service provider(s) including the role of accrediting agent are set out in [RISQS/004](#).

The service provider(s) are responsible for delivery of:

- RISQS website/IT application
- Accreditation/management of qualification assessment/audit provider(s)
- Qualification assessment/audit

The service provider(s) may also be required to undertake other tasks, projects or activities as requested by the RISQS Board.

### 3.11 RISQS user forums and working groups

The RISQS Board may establish user forums to engage the user community for the purposes of scheme performance feedback and development. The Board may also establish working groups and/or projects to address specific issues and opportunities.

Arrangements for the establishment of user forums and working groups are contained in [RISQS/003](#).

### 3.12 Suppliers

The core of the scheme is the qualification assessment of suppliers. The qualification assessment is carried out in accordance with [RISQS/004](#).

After qualifying through RISQS, suppliers are required to maintain the online information relating to their qualification in an up-to-date condition. Failure to do this could invalidate their status as qualified suppliers.

Suppliers are required to provide feedback about operation of the scheme to assist with its development and improvement, via the RISQS website, helpdesk or scheme manager if so appointed.

There is an appeals process available if a supplier does not consider that the service provider(s) has acted in accordance with the scheme policies, rules or procedures or if there is an issue with such policies, rules or procedures. Further information is contained in [RISQS/003](#).

### 3.13 Customers

It is critical that customers participate in RISQS for it to become the preferred route for suppliers to engage with the industry. By specifying that RISQS is their preferred supplier qualification assessment mechanism, customers will encourage suppliers to use the scheme. This is critical for RISQS to become the mechanism for all suppliers to engage with the industry. Specifically, customers should:

- Incorporate RISQS within their safety management system as one of the principal means by which they qualify their suppliers
- Provide feedback on any serious issues related to RISQS qualified supplier's which may have wider industry implications, and on any general aspect of RISQS to assist in the development and improvement of the scheme, via the RISQS website, helpdesk or scheme manager if so appointed

Further information is contained in [RISQS/003](#).

## 4 RISQS website

### 4.1 Website

The RISQS Board manages and operates a web site which provides information on the scheme and where necessary links to the service provider(s) website(s). Information available includes the following:

- Product code hierarchy
- Details of qualified suppliers

- RISQS performance statistics

There are differing rights of access, depending on the organisation, the levels of membership held and the relationships between customer and supplier organisations. Access to core supplier information will be provided free of charge to all industry users with legitimate rights to view such information. By necessity access to information of a confidential or commercially sensitive nature will be controlled through a permissioning regime.

The website also enables interested parties to provide feedback on any aspects of the scheme.

## 5 Further Information

Further information regarding RISQS may be obtained from:

RISQS Board  
RSSB,  
The Helicon,  
1 South Place,  
London,  
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E-mail: [admin@risqs.org](mailto:admin@risqs.org)

Or from the RISQS website  
[www.risqs.org](http://www.risqs.org)

## Appendix A Definitions

Definition of terms commonly used by the GB mainline rail industry, with respect to supplier management and assurance, have been published and are available in the RSSB guidance document [Securing supplier assurance](#). For the purposes of RISQS, the following definitions apply.

### Accreditation

The granting of the rights to act as the service provider(s), or the alteration of existing rights, after the application of a suitable assessment by the Accrediting agent.

### Accrediting agent

An organisation which may be appointed by the RISQS Board to carry out accreditation of the service provider(s).

### Assessment

Systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining assessment evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which qualification assessment criteria defined in [RISQS/004](#) are fulfilled.

### Assessment team

One or more assessors conducting qualification assessments, supported by technical experts with relevant experience as appropriate.

### Assessor

An person with the competence to conduct qualification assessment in support of the lead assessor if required.

### Authorised signatory

Accredited person authorised to sign the RISQS Certificate of Supplier Qualification.

### Certificate of supplier qualification

The Certification awarded by the service provider(s) to the qualified supplier that clearly describes, on or via the RISQS IT Application, the scope of the products or services covered by the qualification.

### Certification

The status awarded to a supplier, who has passed a qualification assessment by the service provider(s) for the supply of one or more products or services.

### Customer

The generic term for any organisation that purchases, or seeks to purchase products. The term is used to cover all of the following: - end user, client, buyer, purchaser and procurer. Many suppliers will also be customers.

### GB Rail Industry

Network Rail, LUL/Transport for London, passenger, light rail and freight train operators, rolling stock organisations, main infrastructure contractors and other rail products and services providers.

### IT application

The database of service provider(s), qualified suppliers and products and services and associated web pages managed by the RISQS Board.

### Lead assessor

Person with the competence to lead a qualification assessment.

**Mandatory requirements**

The requirements specified in the Railway Group Standards or other standards, common norms or regulations. RISQS also requires compliance with the RISQS Scheme documents and associated Guidance Notes.

**Product**

Products are materials or services which are the result of a process.

**Products and services**

Products and services for which a supplier can achieve qualification.

**Railway Group Standards**

Those standards issued by the RSSB in accordance with the Railway Group Standards Code.

**RISQS**

The scheme as described within this document.

**RISQS Board**

The organisation that manages RISQS on behalf of the Rail Industry.

**RISQS scheme manager**

Person(s) who may be appointed by the RISQS Board to fulfil the responsibilities defined in section 3.3. of this document

**Signatory**

Person with the authority to approve the qualification certification of a supplier by using an authorised electronic signature on the RISQS IT application.

**Service provider**

Organisation appointed and accredited by RISQS Board to support delivery of the scheme in accordance with specification defined in [RISQS/004](#).

**Service provider personnel**

Any service provider staff and contracted personnel working on RISQS activities as defined in the list contained in [RISQS/004](#).

**Sub-supplier**

An organisation or person that provides a product or service to the supplier as defined below and/or sub-supplier in the context of a supply chain.

**Supplier**

Organisation or person that provides a product or service to the customer. Many suppliers will also be customers.

**Technical expert**

Person who provides specific knowledge to the assessment team. Note that the specific knowledge or expertise is that which relates to the organisation, the process or activity to be assessed, or language or culture and technical background. A technical expert does not normally act as an assessor in the assessment team unless competence consistent with the requirements of ISO 19011:2002 can be formally demonstrated.

**User**

A user of the RISQS IT application is someone who has been considered by the RISQS Board or Scheme manager if so appointed to be a member of a company which has a legitimate interest in the rail industry such as a supplier, customer and duty holder, member of the service provider(s) or the RISQS Board or its representatives.

## Appendix B References / Related Documents

### RISQS Documents

<a href="#">RISQS/002</a>	Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme Board arrangements
<a href="#">RISQS/003</a>	Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme operation and management
<a href="#">RISQS/004</a>	Railway Industry Supplier Qualification Scheme requirements

### Railway Group Standards

GM/RT2450	Qualification of Suppliers of Safety Critical Engineering Products and Services
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### ATOC Codes of Practice

ATOC ACOP/EC/1003	National Railway Materials and Supply Accreditation Scheme
ATOC ACOP/EC/1006	Inter-Company Train Engineering Change Approval Process

### International Standards

ISO 19011:2002	Guidelines for Quality and/or Environmental Management Systems Auditing
ISO 9000:2005	Quality Management Systems. Fundamentals and Vocabulary
ISO 9001:2008	Quality Management Systems Requirements
ISO 10005:2005	Quality Management Systems. Guidelines for quality plans
ISO 17000:2004	Conformity Assessment. Vocabulary and general principles
ISO/IEC 17021:2011	Conformity Assessment. Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
ISO/IEC 17024:2012	Conformity Assessment. General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons
ISO/IEC 17025:2005	General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories
ISO/IEC 17050-1:2010	Conformity Assessment. Supplier's declaration of conformity, general requirements
ISO/IEC 17050-2:2004	Conformity Assessment. Supplier's declaration of conformity, supporting documentation
ISO/IEC 17065:2012	Conformity assessment - Requirements for certification bodies certifying products, processes and services
ISO/IEC DIS 17067	Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes

### HSE Guidance and Documents

Railway Safety Publication 1 - Developing and Maintaining Staff Competence.

### Industry Guidance and Documents

RSSB Securing Supplier Assurance

RSSB Engineering excellence into competence – Guidance for developing a Competency Management System