

Rail Strategic Agreement For Emergencies (Rail SAFE)

November 2025 - Version 1.1



JESIP
Working Together – Saving Lives

Foreword

The Rail Strategic Agreement For Emergencies (Rail SAFE) supports the safe and effective joint response between the Emergency Services and Network Rail to incidents and emergencies on the rail network. By working closely together to prepare for and respond to emergencies we are making Britain's railways safer for both responders and passengers.

Network Rail is committed to supporting this partnership, helping to get everyone home safe, every day; and Network Rail would like to thank JESIP, and the emergency services for their support and input towards Rail SAFE.





Introduction to Rail SAFE

The railway network includes more than 20,000 miles of railway track, 30,000 bridges, tunnels and viaducts, and thousands of signals and level crossings throughout England, Scotland, and Wales.

Network Rail own, repair, and develop this railway infrastructure to connect people and goods with where they need to be. Network Rail also plan for, manage, and support the response to and recovery from incidents, emergencies and crises on the railway.

Everyday there are incidents occurring across the network that require a joint response between the rail industry and the Emergency Services. Responding to these incidents in a timely, effective, and collaborative way is critical to the safety of those impacted by and responding to the incident as well as mitigating the wider consequences and knock-on safety risks of the incident.

We have developed the Rail Strategic Agreement For Emergencies (Rail SAFE) in partnership with Emergency Services to provide a clear, collaborative strategy for how to respond to emergencies and get everyone home safe, every day.



Rail SAFE, Policy and Guidance Structure

Rail SAFE should be read in conjunction with the Emergency Services Guidance and be used to inform relevant organisational risk assessments, policies, procedures and training. Rail SAFE and the Emergency Services Guidance (the process for accessing the railway infrastructure) are controlled by Network Rail but are developed and maintained in collaboration with the Emergency Services.



Purpose

Rail SAFE is a national agreement between Network Rail and the Emergency Services to collaboratively:

- Plan, prepare and exercise staff for emergencies on or near the railway,
- Keep people safe,
- Respond to and recover from incidents and their wider consequences,
- Learn from emergencies to improve our future response.

The JESIP Interoperability Board, with attendance from police, fire and ambulance representatives have agreed to endorse and support Rail SAFE through JESIP, for use by the Emergency Services in collaboration with Network Rail.

Rail SAFE provides the principles to help Network Rail and the Emergency Services meet their legal responsibilities, deliver emergency plans, follow JESIP and implement effective procedures to manage risk and recover from emergencies around the railway.



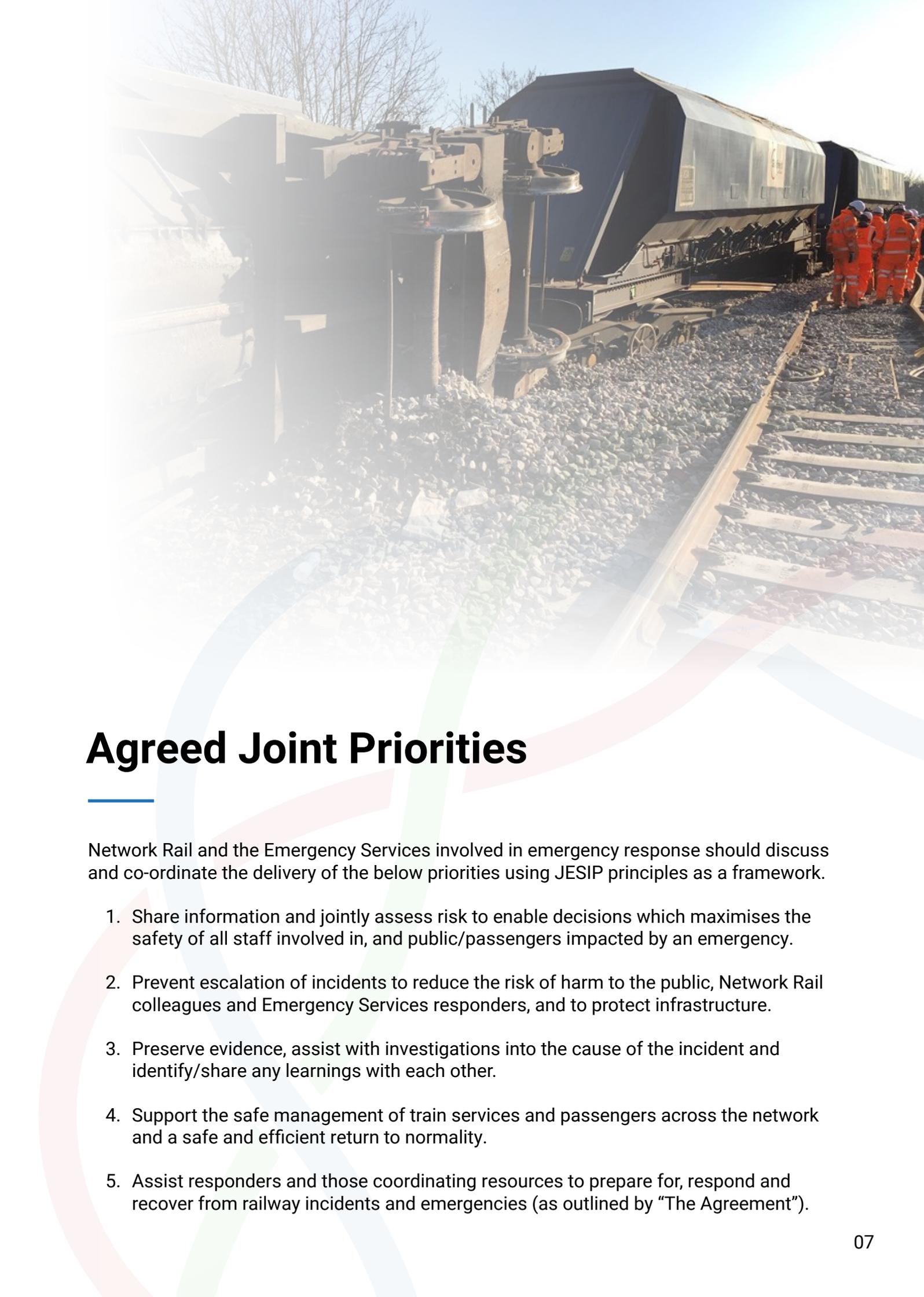
Strategic Agreement For Emergencies

Under this Agreement to jointly respond to railway emergencies safely and effectively, Network Rail and the Emergency Services agree, individually and collectively, to:

1. Use JESIP principles when planning for and responding to incidents to enable effective response and recovery.
2. Consider the information within the Emergency Services Guidance, and follow the Railway Infrastructure Safety and Access Processes as detailed in the guidance, understanding that not doing so can be fatal.
3. Recognise each other's legal duties and that each organisation needs to work together to effectively balance the needs of each duty.
4. Undertake preparedness / resilience activities for railway emergencies as detailed below.
5. Commit to supporting the joint priorities detailed on page 7.

To prepare effectively for an emergency, Network Rail and the Emergency Services also agree to:

- a. Deliver training and regular briefings on the Emergency Services Guidance to all staff in control room positions and staff in relevant first responder positions.
- b. Facilitate and assure that all control rooms have the correct emergency contact numbers for the Network Rail Route Controls and an up-to-date map of their operating area.
- c. Review the Emergency Services Guidance to develop learning, as part of post-incident reviews.
- d. Take any other reasonable mitigations to plan for or manage emergencies on the railway.
- e. Participate in regular joint meetings to enable joint problem solving, sharing of best practice and continuous improvement.



Agreed Joint Priorities

Network Rail and the Emergency Services involved in emergency response should discuss and co-ordinate the delivery of the below priorities using JESIP principles as a framework.

1. Share information and jointly assess risk to enable decisions which maximises the safety of all staff involved in, and public/passengers impacted by an emergency.
2. Prevent escalation of incidents to reduce the risk of harm to the public, Network Rail colleagues and Emergency Services responders, and to protect infrastructure.
3. Preserve evidence, assist with investigations into the cause of the incident and identify/share any learnings with each other.
4. Support the safe management of train services and passengers across the network and a safe and efficient return to normality.
5. Assist responders and those coordinating resources to prepare for, respond and recover from railway incidents and emergencies (as outlined by "The Agreement").

Remember: Seek support and follow the Emergency Services Guidance

The Emergency Services should call the relevant Network Rail Route Control emergency contact number immediately, prior to accessing the railway, except in **EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES** as detailed in the Emergency Services Guidance. This requirement promotes shared situational awareness and a joint understanding of risk, thereby supporting more effective management of railway emergencies.

Safety Is Paramount

The railway environment has a wide range of hazards that can have fatal or serious consequences. Network Rail and the Emergency Services should follow the **Emergency Services Guidance** (the process for accessing the railway infrastructure) to mitigate safety risks to responders and the public as a priority.

Resilience leads, or personnel in each organisation can access the Emergency Services Guidance, the Network Rail Route Control emergency contact numbers, and other supporting documents through the following sites / links:

Resilience Direct:

<https://collaborate.resilience.gov.uk/home/379152/Rail-SAFE-and-the-ESG>

Network Rail's Safety Central:

<https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/the-emergency-services-guidance-and-rail-safe/>





If you need help accessing this document or have any other questions, please contact the Network Rail, National Policing, Security, and Resilience Team at PSR@NetworkRail.co.uk



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