

PROCEDURE

Operating Handbook 2023

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Document ID	NOPR-38
Revision number	11
Approved by	Executive Director, Operations
Date of issue	11 May 2023

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1 Purpose

This operating handbook sets out the V/Line capacity allocation principles and Network management protocols for Access Seekers/Train Operators to Access the V/Line Network.

All documentation relative to Access conditions and obligations not included in the handbook have been listed and described accordingly so that Access Seekers/Operators are aware of their existence and relevance.

2 Definitions, acronyms and abbreviations

Definitions, acronyms and abbreviations commonly used throughout this document are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Definitions, acronyms and abbreviations used in this document

Term	Definition
Access	Either the access sought by an Access Seeker from V/Line or the access provided by V/Line to an Access Seeker pursuant to an Access Agreement, for the purpose of operating Trains on the Network
Access Agreement	An agreement between V/Line as Access Provider and: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> An operator in relation to Access to the Network for freight Trains; V/Line for passenger and heritage Train operations
Access Arrangement	The Standard terms and conditions for all future Access Agreements for the access of Freight Services to the V/Line Network
Access Seeker	As the context requires, either a Train Operator seeking to enter into an access agreement with V/Line or a Train Operator that has entered into an access agreement with V/Line
Ad Hoc Train Path	Means a Passenger Train path requested on a one off basis that is subject to the 'Principle of Passenger Priority'
ARTC	Means Australian Rail Track Corporation
Available Capacity	Means with respect to a rail Line, the available Train Paths for that Line as determined by V/Line
Available Path	An operationally achievable Train Path including an Unscheduled Freight Train Path, other than a Train Path already committed by V/Line to another Train Operator under an Access Agreement
Business Day	A day that is not a Saturday or Sunday or a day appointed as a public holiday
Daily Train Plan	The timetable produced and approved by V/Line in accordance with this handbook that sets out all planned Train movements on the Network on a given day
DMU	A Diesel Multiple Unit Train
Draft Master Train Timetable	The proposed master time table as prepared in accordance with S.10 of the <i>Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act</i>

Term	Definition
ESC	Means Essential Services Commission
ESLO	Means Emergency Services Liaison Officer, a role designated to a V/Line Officer in the EMP whilst an incident is under the control of an external control agency
EMP	Means the V/Line Emergency Management Plan that sets out the obligations for V/Line in dealing with incidents in accordance with the Emergency Management Manual Victoria and rail safety accreditation
EWNO	Means Early Week Night Occupation – these are utilised by the V/Line Infrastructure Division to ensure maintenance of the network meets requirements. These are reoccurring events that require the cancellation of Schedule Services to create maintenance Absolute Occupation windows
Force Majeure	Is as defined in Access Agreements
Freight Services	Means rail transport services that are not Passenger Services or rail transport services that are provided by means of a terminal
Freight Train Path	Means an entitlement of a Train Operator to use a Train Path on the Network of V/Line to provide Freight Services and includes a Scheduled Train Path and an Unscheduled Freight Train Path
Healthy	In respect of a Train service or Train, means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Train service or a Train that has entered the Network or Line of V/Line on time, or • if it has entered the Network or Line late, has made up time, or • if it has entered the Network or Line early, has lost time, such that in the reasonable opinion of V/Line it is running On Time and there are no indications that it will not exit the Network or Line on time, or • it has entered the Network or Line of an Access Provider on time, has lost time enroute, and is not On Time as a result of 'below rail' causes
Good Industry Practice	Means those practices followed in the commercial railway industry when an activity is undertaken in accordance with all applicable Legislation and Standards and with due care and skill
Legislation	Means Commonwealth, Victorian or Local Government Legislation including regulations, orders, by-laws, rules and other subordinate Legislation or other document enforceable under any such Legislation, regulations, orders, by-laws, rules or subordinate Legislation
Line	In respect of the Network of V/Line, means the rail path between two locations on the Network as determined in the Network operating requirements that may be the subject of a Train Path
Line Segment	A segment of rail track of the Network designated as a Line Segment by V/Line in its NSP or this handbook (or both) and

Term	Definition
	which has specific operating requirements and RAMS input requirements
Master Train Timetable	Means the permanent timetable produced and approved by V/Line
MTM	Means Metro Train Melbourne
Network	<p>Means the land and infrastructure leased to V/Line under the Regional Infrastructure Lease from time to time and declared under either the freight Network declaration order 2005 or the passenger Network declaration order 2005.</p> <p>Including railway track, associated track structures and works (such as cuttings, tunnels, bridges, sidings, excavations, landfill, track support earthworks and drainage works), pedestrians crossings, over track structures, under track structures, service roads, signalling, notices and signs, but excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) buildings (including stations, platforms, sheds and shelters) b) car parks c) terminals, storage and receiving facilities d) workshops, depots, yards and fuel points; and e) private sidings that are not leased to V/Line, but includes any infrastructure leased to V/Line, which passes through or is immediately adjacent to any of the infrastructure or facilities referred to in a) to e) above
Network Map	The map of the V/Line Network as shown in this handbook
Normal Hours	The proposed operation of a Train on the Network on the basis that it is consistent with the normal signal box operating hours (block working hours) for the relevant corridor of the Network. The normal signal box operating hours are available from the NSP. The normal signal box operating hours are only changed when changes are made to Scheduled Train Paths for passenger and/or freight trains in the MTT, in accordance with the provisions of the Access Arrangement and this Operating Handbook
NSP	The V/Line Network Service Plan as amended from time to time by V/Line in accordance with this handbook and Access Agreements. Setting out the details for Rolling Stock Access, Train operating limits, Network description, Network characteristics and the Master Train Timetable for scheduled passenger and scheduled and unscheduled freight trains
Occupation	Means Access to the Network for the purpose of inspection, maintenance or construction during which time Trains cannot operate through the Occupation area
Occupations Committee	Representatives of V/Line, MTM and other stakeholders from time to time that meet Weekly in relation to track Occupations and other related works enabling the Train Operators to communicate their interests in works planning and

Term	Definition
	implementation with V/Line and MTM to enable arrangements to be finalised in accordance with Access Agreements
On Time	In respect of a Line utilised by any Passenger Service means within five minutes of the scheduled Line entry or expected Line exit times; and for a Line utilised exclusively by Freight Services means within ten minutes of the scheduled Line entry or expected Line exit times
Out of Hours	All times outside Normal hours
Out of Hours Train Path	Means an Unscheduled Freight Train Path that is out of Hours and may incur additional Access costs in accordance with the Access Arrangement
Passenger Service	Means railway services for the carriage of passengers by Train between locations on the Network of V/Line
Passenger Train Path	Means either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) an entitlement of a Train Operator under an Access Agreement to use a Train Path on the Network of V/Line to provide Passenger Services which has fixed Line entry and exit times and fixed intervals for passenger stops; or b) a Passenger Train Path specified in the timetable approved by the Public Transport Development Authority of Public Transport, as amended from time to time, under section 10 of the <i>Transport Act 1983</i>
Principle of Passenger Priority	The principle of passenger priority is the giving of priority to the provision of rail transport services to passenger service users over the provision of rail transport services to other users.
Printed Schedule	Referred to as an “S” circular issued by the Manager Network Access or authorised officer to the access seeker after due process of an unscheduled train path application for a freight train or for Infrastructure train movements. Issued to all Operators.
Real-Time Scheduling	Means the process of Train Controllers coordinating arrival and departure times for Train Services at the beginning, intermediate and destination locations of a Train journey, where this process takes place on the day of the Train Service in question
RFR	Means Regional Fast Rail
Rolling Stock	Means locomotives, carriages, wagons, rail cars, rail motors, light rail vehicles, DMU's, light inspection vehicles, rail/road vehicles, trolleys and any other vehicle that operators on or uses the rail track
RRL Lines	Means Regional Rail Link Lines (Up and Down RRL's)
Running Ahead	In respect of a Train Service or Train means a Train Service or Train that has entered the Network or Line of V/line before its scheduled entry time or is making up time enroute and in the

Term	Definition
	reasonable opinion of V/Line is expected to exit the Network or Line earlier than its scheduled exit time
Scheduled Services	Means the entitlement of a Train Operator to use a Train Path on the Network of V/Line on a recurrent basis upon entry into or by amendment of its Access Agreement. Services which have a fixed Line entry and exit time
Scheduled Train Path	A Train Path that is allocated to a Train Operator and shown in the Master Train Timetable for freight Trains or the Daily Train Plan and Master Train Timetable for passenger Trains
Standard	Means any standard or code of practice issued from time to time by Standards Australia (an incorporated body formerly known as the Standards Association of Australia), the Association of American Railroads, the International Union Railways, British Standards, Federal Railroad Administration, the Australasian Railway Association or such similar body to the extent that the Standard or code is applicable to the Victorian railway industry
Test Trains	Means Trains which Access the Network for the purpose of testing new or altered Rolling Stock or Infrastructure
TPWS	Means Train Protection Warning System
Train	Means a DMU or locomotive and with or without wagons or carriages used to operate Train Services
Train Controller	Means a person at a Train control centre of V/Line who carries out one or more of the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) performing Train Control Services b) managing and monitoring Train movements and all other operation of Rolling Stock on the Network of V/Line and any activities affecting or potentially affecting such Train movements and Rolling Stock operation; and c) managing incidents that occur or may occur on the Network of V/Line
Train Control Services	Means services involving the giving of directions or the granting of permission to operate Rolling Stock on the V/Line Network consistent with the safe and efficient operation of that Rolling Stock and the Network
Train Manifest	Means a notice (written or electronic form) prepared by a Train Operator in relation to a Train Service or Train containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number and type of each item of Rolling Stock in the consist of the Train • the type, identification number of each item of Rolling Stock and its first point of arrive or departure from the Train Path • the gross mass of the Train • the length of the Train • the motive power including axle load employed by the Train • the maximum wagon axle load

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the location, type and quantity of any dangerous goods on the Train; and any other requirements notified by V/Line that have a specific purpose for the running of certain Trains
Train Operating Committee	Means representatives of V/Line, MTM and other stakeholders from time to time that meet monthly to plan and agree on the implementation dates for Master Train Timetable changes. The Committee also discusses and agrees on the necessary temporary service plan changes for Passenger Services that are impacted by Occupations and works determined by the Occupations Committee
Train Operator	Means a user who runs or a person who runs a Train Service or Train or operates Rolling Stock on the V/Line Network
Train Path	The particular time interval including an entry time and day and exit time and day through which an actual train may travel over a segment of the Network from an origin to a destination and may include stopping points and intermediate times and locations that V/Line considers necessary or appropriate to define the pathway
Train Path Priorities	Means the order of priorities for the scheduling and rescheduling of Train Paths or Train Services and for the provision of alternative Train Paths in accordance with the Principle of Passenger Priority
Train Service	Means a Train run by a Train Operator an Access Provider or a related body corporate of V/Line by which that person provides railway Freight Services or Passenger Services
Unhealthy	In respect of a Train Service or Train means a Train Service or Train that has not entered the Network or Line of V/Line On Time or has lost enroute as a result of 'above rail' causes so that in either case it is not, in the reasonable opinion of V/Line, expected to exit the Network or Line On Time
Unscheduled Freight Train Path	Is a path granted via a request, from a Train Operator, submitted on NOFO-45 Train Path Requisition form. The request must be submitted at least 48 hours prior to, but not more than two weeks in advance of the Entry Time of the requested Train Path.
Unscheduled Services	If, due to an accident, incident or other occurrence outside of the control of the Rolling Stock Operator, which has/will impact the ability for the approved unscheduled train path to be utilised then a Day of Operations Train Path Request may be submitted in writing to the V/Line Senior Train Controller. The Senior Train Controller will address the submitted request, as a best endeavour request when and as workload permits
Utilisation	With respect to a Train Path means the frequency with which the Train Path is used. A Train Path is used when a Train service or Train is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) presented at the scheduled Line entry point

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) exists at the scheduled Line exit point c) the times of entry or exit are not so dissimilar to the scheduled Line entry or exit times so as to require the issue of a separate or new Train Path; and d) the relevant Train Service or Train operates reasonably in accordance with the terms of the Access Agreement or existing arrangement or dispute resolution decision applicable to that Train or Train Service on that Train Path. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no failure to use a Train Path as contemplated in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) if failure occurs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. because V/Line and a Train Operator agree to substitute an alternative Train Path or ii. because V/Line does not make the Network available to the Train Operator other than as a result of an act or omission of the user; or iii. because of a Force Majeure event
V/Line	Is V/Line Pty Ltd
VRTC	Is the Victorian Rail Track Corporation
Weekly	Means Sunday to Saturday inclusive

3 Roles and responsibilities

Table 2 – Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Director Network Services	Is responsible for ensuring all Network Services staff are aware of this procedure, its application and interaction with related procedures
Head of Network Control	Is responsible for ensuring all Network Services staff are aware of this procedure, its application and interaction with related procedures
Manager Network	Is responsible for ensuring all Network Services staff are aware of this procedure, its application and interaction with related procedures
Manager Network Access & Coordination	Is responsible for Network Signallers staff are aware of this procedure, its application and interaction with related procedures
Director, Freight and Third-Party Access	Is responsible to ensure customers are aware of their responsibilities

4 V/Line Capacity Allocation and Network Management

- a) V/Line will carry out its capacity allocation and Network management activities in a manner that is consistent with the Principle of Passenger Priority and V/Line will not unreasonably favour itself or another person over any other person
- b) V/Line will use all reasonable endeavours to carry out its capacity allocation and Network management activities in a manner that is compatible with the operations of any interfacing rail networks
- c) V/Line will also use all reasonable endeavours to allocate any Train Path requested by an Access Seeker and encourage maximum use of the Network by identifying all possible opportunities to create Train Paths that enable all Train Operators to operate their Trains to meet their business obligations
- d) On receipt of an Access application V/Line will make an assessment as to whether there is Available Capacity in the form of an available Train path or Available Paths. This assessment will review the proposed Train operations and how they interact with existing Scheduled or Unscheduled Train Paths and whether modifications can be made to the timetable to accommodate the Access application.
- e) If the V/Line assessment determines that there is insufficient Available Capacity to satisfy the Access application V/Line shall:
 - i. Attempt to find an alternative Train Path that satisfies the requirements of the Access Seeker; and
 - ii. Make an assessment of whether part of the Access Seeker's request can be satisfied with Available Capacity; and
 - iii. Provide a written explanation to the Access Seeker within 24 hours of the receipt of the Access application as to why the Access Seeker's request could not be satisfied in full showing the Available Capacity of the Line and the existing Scheduled or Unscheduled Train paths on the Line which conflict with the Access application
- f) If two or more Access Seekers request the same available Freight Train Path and if it is not possible to satisfy all requests by using alternative similar Train Paths, V/Line will be obliged to allocate the available Train Path to the Access Seeker from which the greatest Utilisation of the Network is achieved by operating the freight service. V/Line's judgement of greatest Utilisation will consider the following aspects that are listed in order of importance:
 - i. Frequency of train path usage
 - ii. Aggregate tonnage comparison
 - iii. Duration of Train Path usageV/Line will not require Access Seekers to identify consignees as part of the assessment process
- g) On request by the Access Seeker, V/Line will provide written advise to the Access Seekers outlining the judgement made based on the assessment of the Utilisation benefits. A copy of the advise will also be forwarded to the ESC.

5 Network Service Plan

- a) The Network Requirements Section of the NSP contains Train operating data relative to the Network
- b) The Addenda to the NSP – contains information relative to the field application of the RAMS. The Addenda also contains Train running documentation (including dangerous goods) and qualifying instructions and details of all locomotives and Rolling Stock authorised to operate on the V/Line Network
- c) The Master Train Timetable is contained in the NSP and details all Passenger Train Paths and scheduled Freight Train Paths

6 Network Map

The Network Map is contained in Appendix B of this Operating Handbook

7 Production of Master Train Timetable and Daily Train Plan

7.1 Master Train Timetable

Table 3 – Roles and Responsibilities for Master Train Timetable

Role	Responsibilities
V/Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain up to date Master Train Timetable incorporating all amendments including a Network Map identifying Available Paths, Attachment 1 (Flow Chart) that sets out the V/Line objectives for ongoing production of the Master Train Timetable • Will provide copies of the Master Train Timetable and Network Map within 7 Business Days of the receipt of a reasonable request from an Access Seeker • May also initiate amendments to the Master Timetable when it is necessary to correct Network Capacity Issues, take advantage of new Network capacity or improve staffing and productivity arrangements in Line with Good Industry Practice including changes to Normal Hours • Will review the request for new or varied Scheduled Train Paths for conflicts within the Master Train Timetable • Where a conflict occurs between Train Operators’ Train Paths, V/Line will finalise all Train Paths by giving priority to requests for Train Paths for Passenger Services then requests for Train Paths for Freight Services. With amendment to existing Train Paths commencing with Unscheduled Freight Train Paths, scheduled Freight Train Paths and then Passenger Train Paths. The agreement of Train Operators will be necessary for any amendments to their Scheduled Train Paths except amendments required by the Public Transport Development Authority of Public Transport pursuant to section 10 of the <i>Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983 (Vic)</i>.

Role	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When agreement is reached, V/Line will return the Train Operators request for new or varied Scheduled Train Paths for acceptance and acknowledgement Will incorporate into the Draft Master Train Timetable any new or varied Scheduled Train Paths arising as a result of variations required by the Public Transport Development Authority pursuant to section 10 of the <i>Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983 (Vic)</i> relevant to Passenger Train Path Priorities and any resulting variations to Freight Train Paths. V/Line will give affected Train Operators as much notice as practicable of any variations of this type.
Train Operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May submit requests for the granting of a new Scheduled Train paths or variation to its Scheduled Train Paths in writing to V/Line, with a three month lead time prior to the next timetable change date as determined between all stakeholders at the Train Operating Committee meetings. A shorter lead-time can be sought on the basis that the variation is essential for ongoing business activities. In the case of a Freight Train Path request that does not require any amendment to any other Train Operator's services, the lead-time for creating the Scheduled Train Path will be one calendar month May submit a request to V/Line to allocate an Unscheduled Freight Train Path to the Train Operator as a Scheduled Train Path. Subject to clause 3f, V/Line will make the Unscheduled Freight Train Path available to the Train Operator as a Scheduled Train Path within 10 Business Days of receipt of the Train Operator's request Train Operators of Passenger Train Paths are responsible for obtaining the approval of the Public Transport Development for all varied or new Scheduled Train Paths in the draft Master Train Timetable
Director Network Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the Master Train Timetable that require additional signaller and/or Train Controller resources will be subject to the authority of the Director Network Services in consultation with the Manager, Access and Interfaces who will ensure that the Access Agreements between the Train Operator and V/Line are complied with

7.2 Daily Train Plan

Table 4 – Definition of Daily Train Plan

Term	Definition
Daily Train Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consists of temporary variations to the Master Train Timetable for a given day, which are necessary to provide for approved variations and other operational disruptions including Occupations, known about before the day of operation • Will be updated on a weekly basis, or more frequently at the discretion of V/Line, and will be accurate with respect to all information known at the time of its preparation • The components for the production of the Daily Train plan are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The current version of the Master Train Timetable; and ii. Temporary variations to Unscheduled/Scheduled Train Paths required by V/Line because of Track Occupations; and iii. Requests from Train Operations for temporary variations to their Scheduled Train Paths and requests for Unscheduled Freight Train Paths; and iv. The NSP; and v. 'S' Circular • The Daily Train Plan can only be altered after finalisation with the authority of the Manager Network Control or the Senior Train Controller, who will use every endeavour to make the amendments without impacting other Scheduled Services. If this is not possible, services requiring amendment will be treated as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. An amendment to a Passenger Train Path will be made if a Scheduled Train Path for a Freight Service can be altered without impacting Train crew and locomotive allocation plans, subject to clause (c) below ii. An amendment to a Scheduled Train Path for a Freight Service will be made if there is no impact on a Scheduled Train Path for a Passenger Service or a Passenger Train Path iii. The responsibility for obtaining the agreement of other Train Operators affected by the changes to enable an amendment to the Daily Train Plan will rest with the Train Operator making the request who will be given the details of the impact on other Train Operators at the time of making the request to allow the requesting Train Operator to decide, in view of the impact on other Train Operators, whether to proceed with the request. V/Line will not amend the Daily Train Plan unless the affected Train Operators have provided V/Line with their

Term	Definition
	agreement to the amendment in writing.

7.2.1 Roles and responsibilities

The roles of the various parties involved in the production of the Daily Train Plan are as follows:

Table 5 – Roles and responsibilities for Daily Train Plan

Role	Responsibilities
Train Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will ensure that their Trains are prepared and resourced to run in accordance with the Daily Train Plan produced by V/Line; and • Follow the process including Train Path Requisition procedure for the production of Daily Train Plan outlined in this handbook; and • Attend the occupations committee meetings convened by V/Line and MTM for the purpose of managing Train operating and track Occupation related changes
V/Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer access for Train Operators to the RAMS • Ensure all relevant information is available to Train Operators • Ensure that all Train Path allocations and scheduling is approved by the affected Train Operators and then conducted in accordance with the following Train Path Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Passenger Train Path requests or entitlements, then ○ Scheduled freight; then ○ Unscheduled freight and then ○ Out of Hours unscheduled freight
The Manager Network Access and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the review of and identification of any conflicts with the Master Train Timetable in relation to Unscheduled Train Path requests • Ensure the liaise with the Train Operators who would be affected by the proposed requirements and detail any potential impact these variations may have on their services. • Ensure where necessary consultation and seek the consent of Train Operators to amend any requirements requested by them to enable implementation without conflict firstly by attempting to negotiate alternative Train Paths. • Ensure the Daily Train Plan is finalised at 1100 hours on the Business Day prior to the Daily Train Plan becoming the subject of Real Time Scheduling

7.2.2 Out of Hours Unscheduled Freight Train Plans

Train Operators may request an Out of Hours Unscheduled Freight Train Plan. V/Line will consider any request received from a Train Operator in accordance with the Train Path Priorities set out in V/Line’s Role and Responsibilities above. Furthermore, in considering an

Out of Hours Unscheduled Train Path request V/Line will investigate the possibility of the Train Operator being able to operate the Train during Normal hours before finalising the allocation of a requested Train Path. The Access costs for Out of Hours unscheduled Train Paths will be as set out in the Access Arrangement.

7.2.3 Unscheduled Train Path Requirements

Unscheduled Freight Train Path requests must be received at least 48 hours prior (such period not including any day that is not a Business Day) to the requested entry time of the Train onto the Network, or it will become a 'best endeavours' approach when under 48 hours. If possible, V/Line will allocate the requested pathway. If not possible, the Operator will be requested to resubmit for a different pathway that is acceptable.

7.2.4 48 Hour Rule

Train Operators need to also consider that the operation of Trains on Lines that are not subject to regular scheduled Train traffic, may need special approval in accordance with Train Operators Notice – 0400 / 08 for active level crossing management purposes. This may result in Unscheduled Freight Train Path requests not being approved in time to operate as intended unless the request is received at least 48 hours prior (such period not including any day that is not a Business Day) to the requested entry time of the Train onto the Network.

7.2.5 Thursdays

On Thursdays the requirements will include Train Operators to provide to V/Line the information which relates to the following Saturday, Sunday and Monday and where the Monday is a public holiday, the information which relates to the following Tuesday.

7.2.6 Holiday Periods

On the last Business Day prior to Christmas, Easter and other holiday periods, the requirements will include Train Operators to provide to V/Line the information that relates to all days in that holiday period and the following Business Day.

7.2.7 Heritage Trains

The operation of heritage Trains on the V/Line Network is currently undertaken by V/Line and this handbook is used to make all arrangements. Rolling Stock details are also included in the NSP. Heritage Trains are operated on Ad Hoc Train Paths.

7.2.8 Test Trains

Test Trains for Rolling Stock and track infrastructure purposes are arranged using this handbook and for V/Line they are operated on Ad hoc Train Paths. For non-passenger Train Operators they are operated as Unscheduled Freight Train Paths.

8 Scheduled Train Path Issue and Surrender

Steps	Procedure	
<p>Request for Unscheduled Train Path to become Scheduled Train Path</p>	<p>Train Operators can request that an Unscheduled Freight Train Path be made a Scheduled Train Path for a Train Operator to utilise on a scheduled basis via the submission of a Scheduled Train Path – Freight Application Part A & Part B (contained within IMs Document NOPR-2980). Train Operators are encouraged to use Scheduled Train Paths so that the Master Train Timetable and resource plans (signal box operating hours etc.,) conform with Good Industry Practice and remain economical for all parties</p>	
<p>Surrender of Scheduled Train Path or variation to Unscheduled Service</p>	<p>The following situations will result in V/Line requiring a Train Operator to surrender a Scheduled Train Path or vary a Scheduled Train Path to an Unscheduled Service:</p>	<p>a) Which creates a risk of injury to persons or damage to property the Scheduled Train path may be immediately suspended by V/Line until the Train Operator has addressed the risk to the reasonable satisfaction of V/Line; and/or</p> <p>b) V/Line will give the Train Operator a written notice as per section 5.4 of the Capacity Use Rules and in compliance with Section 6.3 (vii)(A) of the Capacity Use Rules. V/Line in considering any such response or failure to respond to the Notice will act in accordance with Section 6.3 (vii) (B) and (C) of the Capacity Use Rules</p> <p>i. The application of 7(b)(ii) above will only occur after consideration of the seasonal aspects associated with the Train Operators service delivery contractual arrangements that are directly related to the Utilisation of the Scheduled Train Path in question</p> <p>i. The surrender of the Scheduled Train Path can then be sought provided that the Scheduled Train Path has been sought by another Train Operator; or</p> <p>ii. Where the scheduled Train Path is not being sought by another Train Operator and/or V/Line no longer wishes to roster signalling or control staff for the tasks that have not been required the variation of the scheduled Train Path to an</p>
	<p>Where there is a material breach of Access Agreement conditions in the Access Agreement:</p>	
	<p>The failure to utilise the Scheduled Train Path on at least 50% of the days on which the Train was scheduled during a calendar month. The Utilisation measure of 50% does not include events that were as a result of V/Line not being able to grant Access for the Scheduled Train Path:</p>	

Steps	Procedure	
		<p>Unscheduled Service can then be sought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. In seeking the surrender of a Scheduled Train Path or variation to an Unscheduled Service, V/Line will give the Train Operator a written notice in accordance with section 5.6 of the Capacity Use Rules requiring the Train Operator to demonstrate that the Scheduled train Path should not be surrendered or varied to an Unscheduled Service because of its intention and ability to utilise the Scheduled Train Path at a level equal to or greater than 50% of the scheduled days of operation as set out in 7(b)(ii)A and 8(b)(ii)B above iii. The Train Operator will have 14 days to respond from the date of receipt of the notice issued in 7(b)(ii)c above and V/Line will comply with section 6.3(a)(viii)(B) and act reasonably and in good faith when considering any response by a Train Operator to the notice iv. If the Train operator does not respond to the notice by the required date demonstrating an intention and ability to Utilise the Scheduled Train Path at 50% or greater in each of the next three months, V/Line will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Give further written notice requiring the surrender of the Scheduled train Path so that it can be granted to another train Operator who has requested the Scheduled Train Path that was subject to notice; or ii. Give further written notice requiring variation of the Scheduled Train Path to an Unscheduled Service v. If the Train Operator does respond and demonstrates an intention and ability to Utilise the Scheduled Train Path at 50% or greater in each of the next three months the Train Operator's entitlement to that Scheduled Train Path will remain
	<p>If the Operator has (or had) terminated a rail</p>	



Steps	Procedure
	based freight haulage contract with a customer and the Operator has no other rail freight haulage contract with a customer that requires the continued use of the Scheduled Train Path



9 Train Control and Signalling Resources

Table 6 - Roles and responsibilities of Train Control and Signalling Resources

Role	Responsibilities
Control	Train Control (Control) is staffed continuously for the delivery of the Daily Train Plan. The operation of freight Trains on out of Hours Freight Train Path may require additional staffing at Control. The freight Train Operator will be required to meet additional Access costs for any staffing needs in accordance with the Access Arrangement
Regional Signal Staff	Regional Signalling Staff are rostered Normal Hours. Unscheduled Freight Train Paths which operate Out of Hours may incur additional access charges to cover costs for staffing. Any such charges will be payable by the freight Train Operator in accordance with the Access Arrangement. To avoid this situation, where possible, V/Line will request all Unscheduled Freight Train Paths that fall within Normal Hours to be allocated first, prior to any Out of Hours Unscheduled Freight Train Paths being allocated first, prior to any Out of Hours Unscheduled Freight Train Paths being allocated

10 Reporting of Actual Train Path Utilisation

Table 7 - Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
V/Line	<p>Maintains records of actual mainline freight Train movements to meet its obligations as an Access Provider and to also assist with the decision process for Scheduled Train Path surrender as outlined in clause 7b ii & iii.</p> <p>The records contain the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Scheduled Train Path Utilisation including the percentage of Utilisation per month ii. Unscheduled Freight Train Path Utilisation including the percentage of Utilisation per month iii. Notices to Train Operators for the surrender of a Scheduled Train Path iv. V/Line initiated Train cancellations v. Details of the unavailability of any part of the Network for a Scheduled Train Path to operate; and vi. Force Majeure events

11 Train Control Services

11.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Table 8 - Roles and responsibilities for Train Control Services

Role	Responsibilities
V/Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary objective is to direct Trains to operate in accordance with the Daily Train Plan • V/Line will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Consult with the Train operators but will be solely responsible for the issue of operational directions; and ii. Have a duly certified and authorised personnel to provide Train Control services using communications systems that are voice recorded and in some cases have records of real time signalling system data to assist with incident investigations and complaints handling; iii. Facilitate the running of Train Services in accordance with the Daily Train Plan subject to safety considerations, external incidents involving emergency services response and directions, and timely presentation by Trains at entry point; and iv. Provide continuous Train Control Services for Train Operators to contact at all times using the contact arrangements provided in the NSP
Train Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will present their Trains in accordance with the Daily Train Plan • Will maintain a continuous communications link with V/Line while their Trains are operating on the Network

11.2 Healthy/Unhealthy Trains – Train Path Priorities

In exercising Train Control Services, V/Line will apply the following Train Path Priorities for managing operational conflicts:

Table 9 - Train Path Priorities

Priorities	Procedure
1	V/Line will endeavour to have every Train remain Healthy and arrive at its destination in accordance with the Daily Train Plan
2	If the first priority cannot be achieved due to Unhealthy Trains, V/Line will endeavour to minimise overall delays to Passenger Services on the Network without causing serious and unreasonable interference with Freight Services on Scheduled Train Paths
3	Subject to the first and second priorities, V/Line will endeavour to minimise overall delays to Healthy Freight Services on the Network
4	Subject to the first, second and third priorities, V/Line will endeavour to minimise overall delays to Unhealthy Freight Services on the Network
5	During incidents and emergencies whilst the EMP is in use the above principles will remain whilst it is still possible to operate Trains

11.3 Manager Network Control

Table 10 – Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Manager Network Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is available to conduct review of Daily Train Plan performance with each Train Operator at the request of a train operator. • The results of the reviews will be used to improve scheduling and operational control processes as well as for Train Operators to be able to become more conversant with the Network characteristics
Staff providing Train Control Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist with this process outlined above, staff providing Train Control Services will do the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Train running which varies from the Daily Train Plan (including late and Running Ahead as well as incidents and occurrences) will be logged and Train Performance entered into the TrackR ii. On a day to day basis a Train Operator may discuss situations and actions with the Manager Network Control iii. Train performance will be measured by comparing the actual time of operation of a service against the time scheduled for that service in the Daily Train Plan

11.4 Train Manifest and Operating Requirements

At least 30 minutes prior to entry into the Network the Train Operator must provide the Train Controller with a Train Manifest

11.5 Rolling Stock

Table 11 - Role and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Train Operator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Properly maintain all Rolling Stock used on the Network ii. Ensure that all Rolling Stock used on the Network is accredited iii. Ensure that all Rolling Stock used on the Network is equipped with fully operational safety and safe working equipment which is compatible with the safe working systems iv. Ensure that the axle load of the Rolling Stock (including load) does not exceed the published axle loading weight; and v. Ensure that no Rolling Stock or load exceeds the prescribed dimensional outline as given in the Network Operating Requirements for safe operation

11.6 Directions by V/Line

If V/Line believes on reasonable grounds that one or more individual vehicles in the Rolling Stock used by the Train Operator on the Network is in breach of the NSP, then V/Line may do one or both of the following:

Table 12 - Procedure for Directions by V/Line

Steps	Procedure
1	Direct the Train Operator to cease to use the vehicle or vehicles concerned on the Network and provide a statement of the grounds for such direction as soon as practicable after the direction has been given; or
2	Direct the Train Operator to ensure the vehicle or vehicles concerned comply with the Network operating requirements and the Rolling Stock Standards prior to continuing to use the vehicle or vehicles on the Network

11.7 Train Control Services

Table 13 - Role and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
V/Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with its accreditation requirements, V/Line will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Exercise Train Control Services in accordance with the <i>Book of Rules and Operating Procedures 1994</i> as amended from time to time; and ii. Maintain Train Control Services over the Network in accordance with the EMP. • V/Line may exercise Train Control Services by issuing operational directions to the Train Operators • V/Line may, in exercising Train Control Services, delay, add, cancel, re-route or adjust Train movements • In the event of service disruptions or incidents V/Line must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Use Train Control Services in accordance with the Standard Access Agreement, in particular clauses, 14.4, 14.5 and 14.6 ii. Consult with Train operators regarding the management of any of the Train Operator's Trains iii. Use Train Control Services to impose reasonable operating restrictions, including speed and load restrictions, on any failed Train in order to minimise overall delays to Trains on the Network; and iv. Use Train Control Services to issue reasonable directions, including directions to train Operators to use additional or alternate Rolling Stock to assist failed trains in order to minimise overall delays to Trains on the Network

12 Operational Communication

Table 14 - Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
V/Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Keep the Train Operators properly and promptly informed of any event, activity or incident becoming known to V/Line that will, or is reasonably likely to, prevent or limit the operation of services by the Train Operators ii. Make available to the Train Operators in a timely manner on a website or other electronic means all published regulations. Standards, practices, instructions, directions and notifications from time to time applicable in Victoria relating to Train Control Services or the Network operating requirements to the extent that those regulations. Standards, practices, instructions, direction and notifications are relevant to the operation of the services.

13 Occupations

When V/Line needs to have an Occupation it will be entered in the V/Line Notice of Intent System which Train Operators can review via the V/Line Partner Portal to identify an impact to any Scheduled Train Paths the subject of the proposed Occupation.

The notification will may also occur at the Weekly Freight Operator Forum and V/Line will minimise the impact of Occupations as much as possible and will use reasonable endeavours to provide each affected user with an alternative train path and will comply with the Train Path Priorities.

13.1 Contents of Notice of Occupation

Per NOPR-10 Absolute Occupation Arrangement

A request, via the Notice of Intent system, or Occupation must specify:

- i. The area of the Proposed Occupation (the boundaries of which are not necessarily limited to the work site and may extend to signalling boundaries or locations where Trains can switch to another track or route)
- ii. The timing of the proposed Occupation
- iii. The conditions under which Occupation works will be carried out
- iv. Any amendment or impact on the Train Operator's Scheduled Services necessary for the Occupation; and

13.2 The Types of Occupation

Table 15 - Types of occupations

Type	Definition	Procedure
Under own protection (non-Occupation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work may be performed between Trains. It is common for work to be done in this manner without affecting Train running, however, at times some delays may arise from reducing speed through or around the work site for planned works V/Line will list, in the Notice of Intent, the work location for drivers and other appropriate staff and to describe the protection required for the work location In circumstances of unplanned minor works, work may be completed under an Infrastructure gang's own protection where it is unnecessary to issue Train circulars 	
Occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a major track Occupation that will disrupt any AM peak services or PM peak services or is of prolonged duration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least three months notice of this type of Occupation must be given to Train operators whose Scheduled services are intended to be impacted by the Occupation
Diversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A diversion occurs when an Occupation occurs in multiple track areas (i.e., 2 or more tracks), where alternative routing can be set up around the work site using unaffected adjacent tracks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four weeks notice of this type of Occupation must be given to affected Train Operators whose Scheduled Services are to have altered routing due to the Occupation
Re-Routing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-routing occurs when it becomes necessary to operate Trains via an alternative rail corridor to reach their normal destinations This may arise from an Occupation closing all Lines or where there is insufficient track capacity to divert all Trains past the work site, hence requiring some Trains to be re-routed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three months notice of this type of Occupation must be given to affected Train operators whose Scheduled Services are intended to be routed via an alternative corridor

Track Warrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track warrants are utilised on some lines to enable as train running permits, so there is no impact on Train Operators services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track Warrants are only available for use by V/Line (not available for use by third parties)
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13.3 Service Impacts

Service impact can vary for each type of Occupation and V/Line will ensure that proper planning is in place to limit service impact to that which is essential for the Occupation activities to be completed.

13.4 Implementation of Occupations

V/Line may only implement an Occupation on the conditions set by any relevant Access Agreement.

13.5 3rd Party or State Works

For Occupations to be implemented for 3rd Party or State works, V/Line require all affected freight Train Operators to make their own arrangements for service impact compensation with the principal party requiring the Occupation to conduct works.

13.6 Alternative Freight Arrangements

The V/Line safety management system does not allow for the operation of Trains through affected areas of Absolute Occupations and Train Operators are required to make alternative/substitute non rail based arrangements during Occupation periods where it is not possible to operate Trains on alternative tracks and routes.

13.7 V/Line Responsibilities for Occupations

V/Line, Infrastructure and Safety/Risk officers are responsible for the management of occupations

as follows:

- i. to document and maintain current Occupation requests and approved track Occupations;
- ii. to make arrangements with Train Operators for works Train and track machine movements associated with the Occupation;
- iii. to maintain a works order registration system;
- iv. to determine safe working requirements of an Occupation and obtain all necessary agreements;
- v. to approve documentation prepared in relation to required timetable changes;
- vi. to approve timetables for all works Trains in consultation with Train Operators;
- vii. to prepare and issue the necessary Train notices and circulars;
- viii. record the details of all Scheduled Train Paths impacted by the Occupations; and
- ix. record all instances of Occupation cancellations and overruns including notification times to Train Operators as a result of the unplanned events encountered.

14 V/Line Emergency and Crisis Management Plan

- For rail based emergencies on the V/Line Network such as derailments, where there are no serious injuries, V/Line will act as the control agency responsible for the management of the emergency
- Any other authority at the scene will act as a support agency acting under the direction of the V/Line site controller
- If there are serious injuries involved, or for other emergencies including a level crossing accident a fire, or a dangerous goods spillage, V/Line will act as a support agency and a V/Line Officer will be appointed as ESLO whose duties will include protecting the scene and working under the control of an emergency service control agency (Police, Military or Fire Brigade). V/Line staff and Train Operator staff will be responsible for supplying resources as requested to control the emergency and the provision of technical and professional engineering advice
- It may also be necessary for V/Line and/or Train Operators to provide Access or Rolling Stock to the Control Agency and as support agencies we are responsible for complying with such requirements
- V/Line will use every endeavour to preserve the normal conditions of Access Arrangements during incident response and recovery. Where this is not possible V/Line will consult with Train Operators to explain why the incident requires changes to normal Access Agreement conditions and the likely duration of the situation
- V/Line will also inform Train Operators of the types of Access to track that will be used to recover the situation and work towards normal Train operations with updates provided as frequently as reasonable practicable, and necessary and no more than eight hours apart
- If the incident involves recovery activities by Train Operators, an onsite meeting will be conducted by V/Line to enable Train Operators to outline their Access needs so that recovery arrangements are put in place and V/Line emergency activities are suspended or altered
- The V/Line Emergency Management Plan is included in all Access Agreements with V/Line. The V/Line Emergency Management Plan contains guidelines for:
 - i. Employees of V/Line
 - ii. Employees of Train Operators operating on the V/Line Network; and
 - iii. Contractors to V/Line providing services
- From time to time, emergency management exercises are arranged with all agencies and V/Line along with Train Operators are required to participate to ensure that emergency situation scenarios are fully responded to. There may also be occasions when the Network is not available due to military or defence purposes.

15 Communication and Consultation

There are two formally established protocols in place with MTM, V/Line and Train Operators for:

i. Track Occupations Meeting

A weekly meeting is conducted and all aspects relating to Occupations, works and speed restrictions are discussed. The Occupations Committee also co-operates to ensure that Occupations are minimised by co-ordinating multiple works on rail corridors encompassing V/Line and MTM Networks

ii. Train Protocol Meeting

A monthly meeting is conducted to plan changes to the Master Train Timetable and temporary changes to Scheduled Train Paths due to Occupations and special events

15.1 Contact List

Table 16 - Contact list

Contact	Contact Details
V/Line contact for Train Operators on the V/Line Network relating to Train Path requests for inclusion in the Daily Train Plan	<p>The Manager – Network Access and Coordination Address: Level 5, 452 Flinders Street Melbourne VIC 3000 GPO Box 5343 Melbourne VIC 3001 Email: adhocfreightpaths@vline.com.au</p>
V/Line contact for Train Operators for matters relating to Real Time Scheduling of the Daily Train Plan	<p>The Manager – Network Control Address: Level 11 628 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Tel: 03 9619 1077</p>
V/Line contact for Train Operators seeking accreditation for Rolling Stock to operate on the V/Line Network	<p>Director Systems & Safeworking Address: 5/452 Flinders Street Melbourne VIC 3007 Email: rail.safety@vline.com.au</p>
V/Line contact for Train Operators seeking advice regarding the Master Train Timetable and scheduled services	<p>The Network Services Performance Manager Address: Pod A, Level 1 Southern Cross Station GPO Box 848 Melbourne VIC 3001 Tel: 03 9619 2145</p>
V/Line contact for all Train Service matters	<p>Director Network Services Address: Level 11 628 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Tel: 03 9619 1077</p>

The Director Network Services is also responsible for the upkeep of this operating handbook in accordance with this operating handbook and ensuring stakeholder consultation occurs for any changes that have an impact on all Train Operator's activities in accordance with their Access Arrangement.

Complaints or questions about the application of rail Access Arrangements in accordance with the Network Management rules and Capacity Use Rules should also be lodged with the Director Network Services who will deal with the matter as the V/Line officer responsible for ensuring that each complaint is dealt with in good faith with the overall objective of promoting sound working relationships with Train Operators. As well as developing the knowledge and skills of V/Line personnel to deal with multiple Train Operator Access to the Network. All complaints will also be reported to the ESC and include the details of resolution and confirmation that the Train Operator was given the option of settling the dispute in accordance with Access Agreement conditions or taking the matter directly to the ESC.

16 Reference documents

This manual or guideline should be read and applied in conjunction with the following documents:

16.1 V/Line documents

Table 17 – Other V/Line documents

Document ID	Title	Relationship
NOPR-2980	Scheduled Train Path / Freight – Application & Approval Procedure	
NOPR-10	Absolute Occupation Arrangement	

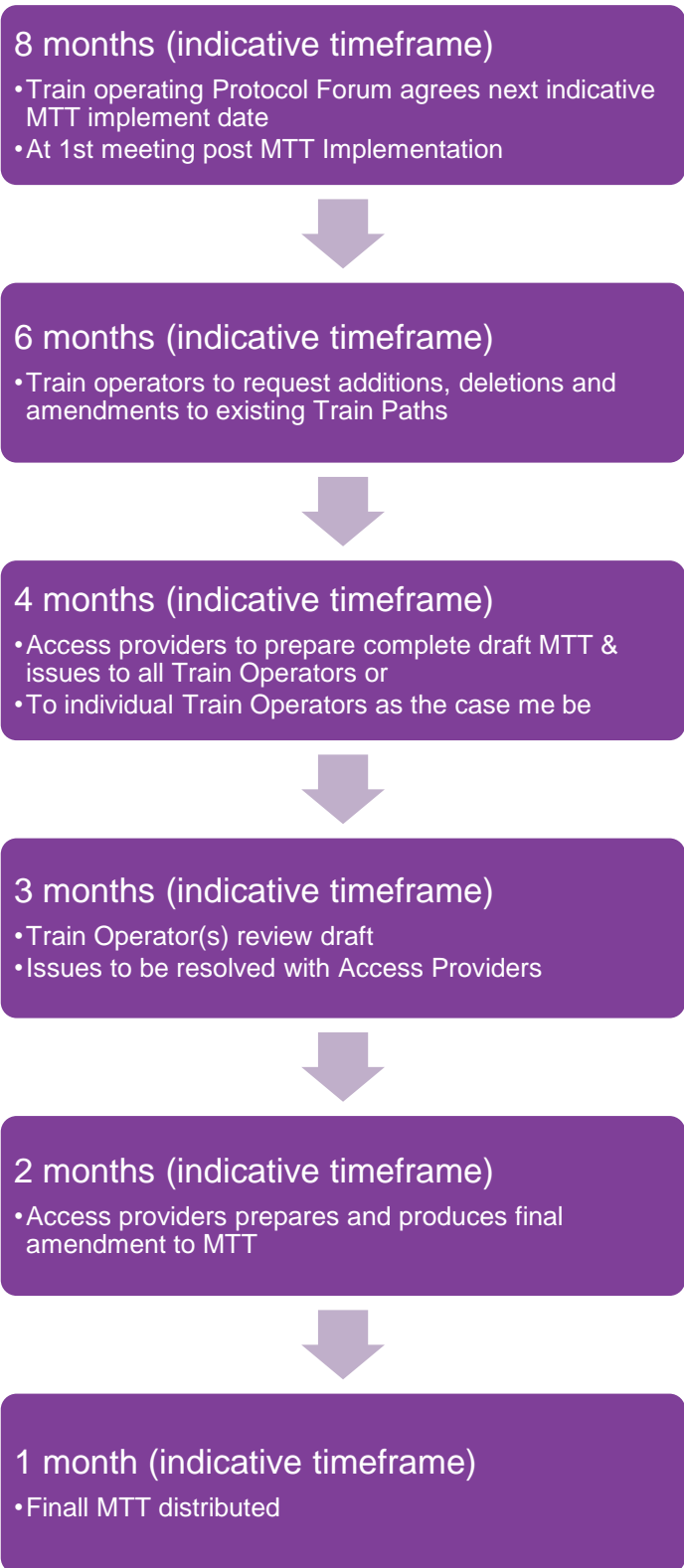
17 Document history

Table 18 – Document history

Rev	Prepared/Revised by	Date	MoC
11	Tom Tomasello, Train Control Trainer & Stephen Seckold, Manager Network Access & Coordination	4 May 2023	N/A
Change description: Updated handbook to reflect accurate information, in accordance with current V/Line procedures. Updated to new template.			

Appendix A – Master Timetable (MTT) Development Flow Chart

- Infrastructure
- Project Delivery
- Franchise Obligations
- Train Crewing Projects
- Capacity Initiative
- Customer Feedback



Unresolved issues to be addressed in accordance with process nominated in the appropriate Access Agreement & Operating Handbook



Appendix B – Network Map

