Procedures for Alteration of Allocated International Paths triggered by IMs

Appendix to the Procedures for designing the annual timetable

Version 3.0

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Content

Disclaimer, application, and transition period

This document is intended as a handbook for the implementation of the *Procedures for Alteration of Allocated International Paths triggered by IMs* as described by RNE. As neither legislation nor IT-systems are currently adapted to enable all the elements of TTR, individual TTR elements can only be implemented by the infrastructure managers to a limited extent for the upcoming timetable periods, starting in December 2024. If and when the legislation and IT-systems fully enable the implementation of all the elements of TTR, the different RNE handbooks on those elements should be adapted and applied to the process. The exact details for the transitional period are defined in the "*Scope of TTR for Timetables 2025-2028*"[1].

Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Bodies should adapt their internal processes and the Network Statement in line with the *Procedures for Alteration of Allocated International Paths triggered by IMs* from X-3.25, where X denotes the first timetable referring to the complete roll-out of TTR.

Note that the process described in the Handbook does not fully reflect the targeted TTR elements, it is expected that the handbook will be subject to update or refinement.

[1] Accessible via: https://rne.eu/downloads/

Version history

VERSION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE	CHANGES
0.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-01-28	Document created by Sebastián Čarek
0.2	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-02-05	Inclusion of remarks from the S&TT HLG
0.2.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-03-19	Inputs from the S&TT WG Group members collected
0.3	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-04-02	Document revised by the S&TT WG, inputs accepted/rejected, open points postponed to the next meeting
0.3.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-09-01	Draft for the S&TT WG, new remarks and survey results prepared for decision-making
0.3.2	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-10-14	Draft complemented with the legal check
0.4	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-10-16	Revised document finalised by the S&TT WG
1.0	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2019-12-04	Document approved by the RNE GA
1.1	Sebastián Čarek TT & Project Manager	2021-02-08	New revision based on the results of the TCRs in TT project, TTR developments and other collected business needs
1.2	Sebastián Čarek Capacity Manager	2021-03-01	Inclusion of remarks from the S&TT WG
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1.4	Sebastián Čarek Capacity Manager	2021-04-15	Adjustments in the S&CM HLG
1.5	Sebastián Čarek Capacity Manager	2021-04-22	Adjustments following the S&CM HLG´s opinion gathering
1.6	Zsolt Ungvári Capacity Manager	2021-10-13	Adjustments following the revision of the document by the Legal Matters WG and inclusion of remarks from the S&TT WG
1.7	Zsolt Ungvári Capacity Manager	2021-10-27	Adjustments following the revision of the document by the Legal Matters WG
2.0	RNE General Assembly	2021-12-07	Version 1.7 approved by the RNE General Assembly on 7 December 2021
2.1	Alessandro Bianchi Timetabling manager	2023-02-10	New revision with the inclusion of the path withdrawal
2.2	Alessandro Bianchi Timetabling manager	2023-03-08	Inclusion of remarks from TT WG and CM AG and preliminary legal check by the RNE JO Legal Team
2.3	Alessandro Bianchi Timetabling manager	2023-03-20	Inclusion of additional remarks from TT WG and LM WG
2.4	Alessandro Bianchi Timetabling manager	2023-03-24	Inclusion of the remarks raised and discussed during the TT WG meeting
3.0	RNE General Assembly	2023-05-31	Document approved by the RNE GA

1 Introduction and scope of this document

Based on the contracts of use of the infrastructure/path track access agreements, applicants can expect that an allocated path is available up to its operation. However, in several cases, it may be necessary for infrastructure managers and allocation bodies (Hereafter IMs) to alter already allocated international paths. This is also valid for adjustment, replacement[2] or withdrawal of allocated international paths. This activity is the so-called "**Alteration of an Allocated International Path**" (or hereafter short "Path Alteration"). However, the need for path alteration shall be reduced to a minimum. This subject has been tackled in the project "Timetable and Capacity Redesign" (TTR).[3]

A path alteration may refer to one single running day, several days or all remaining days in the annual timetable; It is also possible to alter the whole path section or just a part of it. It applies to paths in an annual timetable and to those allocated using the short-term planning process as well, including pre-arranged paths on the RFCs.

Information on the path alteration processes (both on alterations with multi-network impact and alterations only affecting domestic traffic) are to be described in the Network Statement of each IM. IMs are obliged to implement these procedures according to the chapter "Disclaimer, application, and transition period" and by this promote internationally harmonised timetabling processes over the single European railway area.

2 Reference documents

This handbook follows and is based on the principles set down in the

- Directive 2012/34/EU
- Regulation 913/2010
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 454/2011 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem 'telematics applications for passenger services' of the trans-European rail system (TAP TSI)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 1305/2014 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the telematics applications for freight subsystem of the rail system in the European Union and repealing the Regulation (EC) No 62/2006 (TAF TSI) TAF TSI – Annex D.2: Appendix F – TAF TSI Data and Message Model
- B.30 Schema — messages/datasets catalogue needed for the RU/IM communication of TAP TSI
- TAP/TAF TSI Sector Handbook for the Communication between RUs/IMs v3.2
- Procedures for designing the annual timetable v1.0
- RNE Guidelines for Coordination / Publication of Planned Temporary Capacity Restrictions for the European Railway Network Version 3.00 ("TCR Guidelines")
- RNE Handbook for International Contingency Management Version 2.0
- Description of the Timetabling and Capacity Redesign Process Version 3.00
- Handling Temporary Capacity Restrictions in Timetabling – Process Version 1.0

[2] The difference between path adjustment and path replacement is in the fact whether the first running day has already passed. The path cannot be replaced (only adjusted) if the train already ran at least once.
[3] Among other things, TTR introduces timely planning of TCRs and commercial conditions motivating IMs to minimise the number of path alterations.

3 Reasons for triggering path alteration

The IMs shall reduce the need for path alteration to a minimum by timely respecting the process described in the TCR Guidelines and required by Annex VII to Directive 2012/34/EU. However, there are still some reasons why infrastructure managers may need to trigger the process of path alteration:

1. TCR
   - Late TCR becomes known.
   - Exact details of a minor impact TCR becomes known.
   - Exact timing of a TCR originally beyond the control of IMs becomes known.
   - Originally unexpected shift, shortening or prolongation of an already published TCR become necessary.
2. Disturbance
   - TCR caused by force majeure emerges.
   - To re-establish safe train operations
3. Other national reasons
   - To ensure the best possible matching of all path requests (for this special case, see chapter 7 about Path Optimisation)[4]
   - National legal requirements (e.g., ad-hoc capacity requests of armed forces as a matter of priority[5]).
   - Usage of a path below a threshold quota to be established in the Network Statements, for a period of at least one month.

4 Path Request System

For best results, it is recommended that if applicants use the Path Coordination System PCS (Internet-based communication system for the optimisation of international train path coordination) for initial requests already, the PCS is used also for the path alteration process.

The path alteration process can be triggered in PCS as soon as the path is allocated.

The PCS functionalities are described in the "PCS Documentation" (https://rne.eu/it/rne-applications/pcs/documentation/).

5 Path Alteration Process Description

5.1 List of involved stakeholders

Stakeholder	Definition/explanation
Initiating IM	The IM triggering a path alteration, which is in charge of the process coordination.
Affected IM	Infrastructure managers of the preceding and the subsequent path sections, which are affected by the path alteration triggered by the initiating IM.
Affected applicant(s)	The applicants holding the rights of the allocated international path, which are affected by the path alteration triggered by the initiating IM.

[4] For instance, pursuant to point 6 of Annex VII to Directive 2012/34/EU, when IMs decide on late path requests, this case requires approval by the applicant to which the path had been allocated.
[5] Applicable in Germany and France.

Lead IM *(only applicable if the initial request was placed in PCS)*	The active coordination role in the path alteration process is overtaken by the initiating IM. However, in PCS the lead IM (for the initial path request) remains in the dossier with the right to cancel the entire dossier once it reaches back the active timetable phase.

5.2 Triggering Path Alteration

The applicant holding the rights to the initially allocated international path shall be informed immediately when the IM intends to trigger the path alteration process or when the IM gets into the possession of information on which basis it can be presumed that triggering the path alteration is highly probable.

Firstly, the initiating IM has to evaluate if the path alteration process will have a multi-network impact. The following definition shall be used for evaluation:

A multi-network impact as the result of the path alteration process shall be expected if the agreed running days, border times, path number, Operational Train Number and or parameters affecting the timetable might be changed. A multi-network impact shall also be expected in a case where the alternative or the withdrawal of the path (in case of no alternatives) would affect the operational concept to the extent that the applicant will have to request a path modification in one of the preceding/subsequent networks (i.e. additional operational stop).[6]

If applicable, the IM triggering path alteration always has to analyse a possibility to provide an immediate economically viable alternative that causes no multi-network impact.

The IM triggering path alteration becomes the initiating IM. The initiating IM always has the right to withdraw the alteration request[7].

In case a multi-network impact is expected as the result of the path alteration process, the initiating IM has to inform all potentially involved stakeholders, especially, IMs of the subsequent and preceding path sections about the start of the process, and the estimated impact at the border(s).

The affected IM(s) has to evaluate if any of their neighbouring IMs are also affected by the path alteration process, and in case communicate the same information (start of the process and estimated impact at the border(s)).

Affected IM(s) has to inform the relevant applicant(s) about the start of the process.

5.3 Coordination of the Path Alteration

Depending on the reasons for triggering Path Alteration, IMs might:

- Analyse and propose path alternatives, the sub-chapter 5.3.1 is applicable.
- Withdraw the originally allocated path without offering any alternative solution for only as long as necessary in specific situations, sub-chapter 5.3.2 is applicable.

5.3.1 Construction of an Alternative Path

It is up to infrastructure managers to analyse and propose path alternatives. The initiating IM and the affected IMs always have to take into account as far as possible the initial path request, the

[6] It should be taken into consideration that the initiating IM has only limited information on the applicants' operational concept. The applicants have possibility to express their opinion within the acceptance phase.

[7] Path Alteration in PCS: the initiating IM has the right to withdraw the phases "path alteration conference" and "path alteration offer".

commercial and operational constraints of the applicants and the risks of transport being shifted to less environmentally friendly modes of transport.

The affected IMs should agree in advance when every affected IM will finish the construction process. In the process of determination of the time frame, it has to be ensured that all affected IMs have sufficient time to construct their train path section; coordination is ensured by initiating IM.

The initiating IM should be, by default, the first IM to provide an alternative path. The next IM to provide an alternative path is the affected IM responsible for the subsequent path section and or the IM responsible for the preceding path section in case it is affected, and so forth towards.[8] The IMs in the process of construction also need to take into account infrastructure and capacity availability and check it with their partners. The necessary alternative path should be provided by all affected IMs.

In order to increase efficiency, any IM might agree with the IM responsible for the subsequent path section on the timetable times at the cross-border station without filling in the details of the path. The detailed path is provided by the IMs later; this enables earlier involvement of the affected IMs into the construction of an alternative path.

Each affected IM has to immediately inform the affected applicant and all other affected IMs as soon as it becomes aware that there is no economically viable alternative path and the originally allocated path should be withdrawn.[9]

5.3.2 Withdrawal of the originally allocated path without alternatives solutions

Subject to the fair and non-discriminatory access to the infrastructure, IMs have the right to withdraw paths already allocated, without any alternative solution, for only as long as necessary in specific situations such as:

- In an emergency and, where absolutely necessary, on account of a breakdown making the infrastructure temporarily unusable;
- in case the remaining capacity of the route and the alternatives are not sufficient to provide all applicants holding the rights to the originally allocated paths with economically usable alternatives. Allocation rules in a fair and non-discriminatory manner shall be applied. The applicable allocation rules are defined in the RNE Handbook for International Contingency Management and Network Statements of each IM;
- Usage of a path below a threshold quota to be established in the Network Statement, for a period of at least one month;

In case of multi-network impact, the initiating IM should coordinate with affected IM(s), in order to adjust the path to a reasonable point of the infrastructure avoiding operational issues on other networks.

Depending on the reason for the path withdrawal, it´s also possible to extend the coordination with other potentially involved stakeholders (such as affected applicant(s) to understand the possible impact on the operational concept of the previous/next partner applicant).

[8] The affected IMs, coordinated by the initiating IM, might deviate from the defined order in case it increases efficiency and suits better a particular path alteration.
[9] This approach should prevent redundant work on IMs´ side, but also gives more time to the applicants to place a new request.

5.4 Path offer

Once the initiating IM and all affected IMs have provided a harmonised alternative or withdrawn the path[10], each IM is in charge of sending the consistent offer – with remarks if necessary - or the updated path details (in case of withdrawal).

5.5 Path acceptance/allocation

In case of path withdrawal, no acceptance by the affected applicant(s) is required.

If an alternative path is offered, the acceptance of the offer is sent by each affected applicant[11]. IMs have to adjust the allocated paths accordingly in the IT system.[12]

If any of the applicants disagree with the alternative, the affected applicant has the right to reject the path alteration offer and ask for adaptation; any corresponding remark will as far as possible be treated in the second offer. In case any of the applicants rejects the offer, it is recommended to withdraw the unharmonised running days of the path; however, IMs can also leave the remaining national path section to the particular applicants and/or shorten the allocated path until the reasonable infrastructure point. This process is described in the Network Statement of each IM.

The applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but:

- at the latest within **7 calendar days**, in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs **more than 30 days** prior to the train departure,
- at the latest within **24 hours**,[13] in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs **less than 30 days** prior to the train departure. The IMs can also set up the latest deadline, which should be 12 hours prior to the train departure.[14]

If no response is sent by the applicants in the timeframe indicated above, the IMs withdraw the concerned running day and utilise the capacity for different purposes (applicants).[15]

6 Timelines for path alteration

In order to be able to fulfil the provisions set by point 12 of Annex VII of Directive 2012/34/EU the following timelines[16] for the path alteration process should be applied for minor impact TCRs, late TCRs and changes in known TCRs known 135 days before the beginning of the capacity restriction. In cases the IMs need to re-establish safe train operation and or a disturbance appears, the IMs might apply shorter timeframes. Furthermore, in a national path alteration, IMs and ABs can agree with the affected applicants on a shorter timeline than defined in 6.1 and 6.2.

[10] Path alteration in PCS: Initiating IM has to set up light on green. If there are other IMs affected, they have to set up their lights on green as well. If all IM lights are on green, initiating IM has to submit the path alteration offer.

[11] Path alteration in PCS: if all affected applicants agree with the alternative path offer, then the applicant holding the rights to the formerly initially allocated path on the network of the initiating IM sends a formal acceptance notification.

[12] A formal path allocation is a legal act. For the time being, this remains a national process and contracts are delivered IM by IM.

[13] Excluding Saturdays,Sundays and bank holidays .

[14] In case the path alternative is submitted by IMs less than 12 hours prior to the train departure, the acceptance phase will be agreed between IMs and applicants on the case-by-case basis.

[15] Afterwards the applicants still have possiblity to apply for the capacity on the concerned day using the ad hoc process, nevertherless, with lost priority to other alterated paths and ad hoc requests placed earlier.

[16] T- #: a deadline referring to the first day of of the capacity restriction (T) and the number of days (#) in advance of this deadline.

6.1 Timeline for alteration of passenger trains

Deadline	Action
T-135 days	The last day for IMs to trigger the path alteration in relation to the upcoming TCR
T-120 days	IMs provide internationally harmonised alternative offers
T-113 days	The last day for applicants to accept/reject offers or ask for adaptation[17]
T-106 days	The last day for IMs to allocate accepted offers or provide harmonised second offers

6.2 Timeline for alteration of freight trains

Deadline	Action
T-45 days	The last day for IMs to trigger the path alteration in relation to the upcoming TCR
T-30 days	IMs provide internationally harmonised alternative offers
T-23 days	The last day for applicants to accept/reject offers or ask for adaptation[18]
T-16 days	The last day for IMs to allocate accepted offers or provide harmonised second offers

The IMs can start the path alteration for freight trains earlier as the longer delay in the freight alteration reduces flexibility in alternatives. The timeline in 6.1 and 6.2 is the framework only for the latest deadlines.

7 Path optimisation process

The path optimisation process is a special case of the path alteration. Compared to the standard path alteration process, in the path optimisation process, the original path is still available for the train operation and active for the applicants holding the rights to this allocated path. The IMs trigger the path optimisation process to ensure the best possible matching of all path requests and or to increase the line capacity by timetable optimisation.[19]

The IM triggering path optimisation process also becomes the initiating IM. The initiating IM always has the right to withdraw the path optimisation request. The initiating IM informs about the start of the path optimisation process of all affected IMs and applicants (if there are no affected IMs, then only affected applicants). The communication has to include the information that the process is driven by the optimisation and not by the fact that the original path is not available anymore.

Any path optimisation attempt with a multi-network impact is subject to confirmation of affected IMs before it is submitted as an alternative path offer.

[17] The acceptance timeline follows chapter 5.5.
[18] The acceptance timeline follows chapter 5.5.
[19] Use cases and the approach for the optimisation due to conflicting new a rolling planning request and already allocated rolling planning paths is described in 2.4 of the annexe “Allocation Guidelines for Conflicting Capacity Announcements and Requests” to “Description of the Redesigned Timetabling Process v1.01”.

The applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but:

- in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs more than **30 days** prior to the train departure, the applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but at the latest within **7 calendar days**,
- in case the path alternative is submitted by IMs less than **30 days** the applicants' acceptance should be sent as soon as possible but at the latest within **24 hours**,[20]
- if no response is provided by the applicants in time, the alternative path offer is considered as rejected and the original path remains active and allocated.

If the path alternative was accepted by the applicants then the IMs shall make the below steps:

- in case the path alternative is submitted by the IMs more than **30 days** prior to the train departure and the applicants accepted it within 7 calendar days, the IM shall cancel the optimised old path/optimised part of the old path within **7 calendar days**,
- in case the path alternative is submitted by the IMs less than **30 days** prior to the train departure and the applicants accepted it within **24 hours**, the IM shall cancel the optimised old path/optimised part of the old path within **24 hours**.

In case the applicant submits a major modification request (please see Annex B of "*Procedures for Modification of Allocated International Paths*") for the path, which is already part of the Path Optimisation process, then the IMs stop the optimisation process and notify the other involved stakeholders.

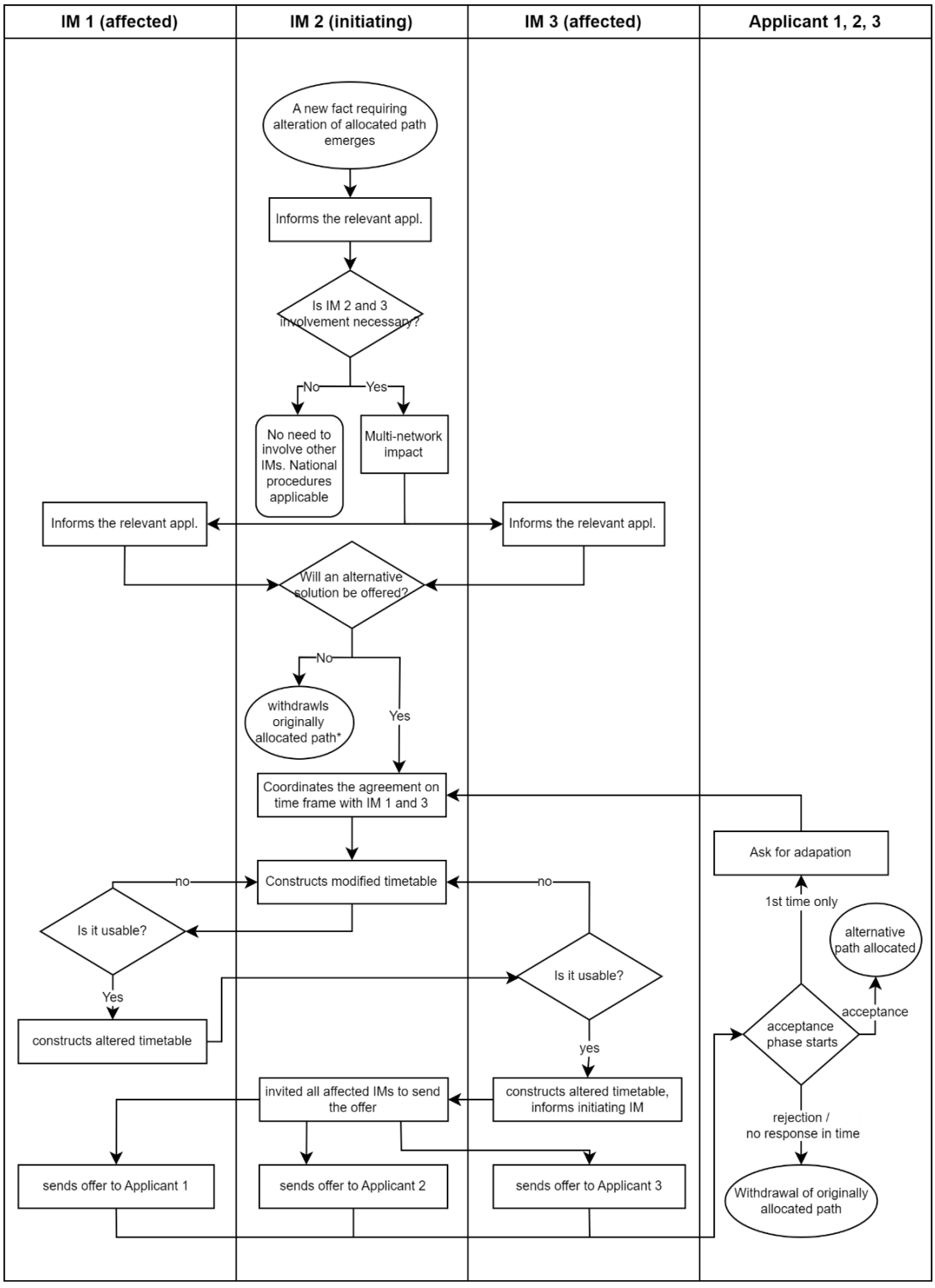
Each Infrastructure Manager/Allocation Body has set up specific contact points (One-Stop-Shop, or OSS) to ensure efficient handling of the international path requests.

Contact details: http://www.rne.eu/organisation/oss-c-oss/

[20] Excluding Saturdays,Sundays and bank holidays.

8 Annex A – Diagram complementing chapter 5

The process diagram below complements the document and displays a situation when a train runs over three networks in order IM1, IM2 and IM3. In each network a different applicant has been granted the right to use the path concerned. Applicant 1 is the owner in network of IM1 and so forth. A path alteration is triggered by IM2, which is responsible for the network in the middle of the international path. The process diagram does not include any TCR consultation, which might be also part of the communication between IMs and applicants.



*The initiating IM should coordinate with affected IM(s), in order to adjust the path to a reasonable point of the infrastructure avoiding operational issues on other networks.