

Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager Publishes Final Network Statement Version 4

Johannesburg, South Africa | 18 September 2026

Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager (TRIM) today announced the release of the approved **Network Statement Version 4 (NS V4)**, marking an important step in South Africa's rail reform journey and reinforcing the country's commitment to a more open, transparent and competitive rail sector.

Building on earlier editions, the updated document introduces a range of enhancements designed to provide greater clarity, transparency and flexibility for existing and prospective rail users. Developed through extensive engagement with train operating companies, freight owners, customers, regulators, industry associations and government stakeholders, the final framework reflects practical experience, stakeholder input and a shared commitment to strengthening rail freight in South Africa.

As the principal reference document governing access to the national rail network, NS V4 sets out the conditions of access, capacity allocation processes, commercial arrangements and the respective responsibilities of participants operating within the open access environment. The updated framework supports fair and non-discriminatory access, improved utilisation of rail infrastructure and greater certainty for investment and long-term planning.

Enhancements include clearer recognition of Access Seekers, expanded provisions for ad hoc applications, improved visibility of available capacity, strengthened governance principles and greater clarity regarding supporting and ancillary services required for rail operations. Together, these improvements broaden opportunities for participation, provide greater operational flexibility and support increased use of the rail network.

The key timelines for the annual Train Path Application and Allocation process are set out below

Milestone	Timeline
Annual Train Path Applications	18 September 2026 – 31 December 2026
Assessment of Applications	1 January 2027 – 31 March 2027
Notification and Consultation with Successful Applicants	1 April 2027 – 30 June 2027
Publication of Timetable and Commencement of Operations	One month before execution of allocated capacity

This latest iteration advances the objectives of the National Rail Policy and the Economic Regulation of Transport Act while contributing to a more efficient, integrated and financially sustainable freight logistics system. It also provides increased regulatory certainty and confidence for current and future rail market participants.

TRIM remains committed to working collaboratively with industry participants, regulators, government and customers to unlock the full potential of South Africa's rail network and support economic growth through improved connectivity, investment and infrastructure utilisation.

The final Network Statement Version 4, together with all relevant annexures are available on the TRIM website at <https://www.transnet.net/TRIM-Networkstatement>.