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Planning

Insulated Rail Joints & Rail Ancillaries

NETWORK RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-016487

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-065b10

Published 24 February 2026, 1:57pm

Scope

Description

Network Rail is undertaking market research to assess the current level of industry interest, capability and capacity for the manufacture and supply of Insulated Rail Joints (IRJs) and Rail Ancillaries (Closure Rails). These goods will be required to be manufactured to specified standards, supplied in varying lengths and configurations, and delivered to meet both planned and emergency operational requirements.

The Information Document available via Bravo provides full details of the requirement, including:

- Background to the requirement and the operational context
- Technical specifications for all IRJ and Closure Rail types
- Applicable rail profiles, joint configurations and manufacturing processes
- Anticipated monthly and annual volumes based on historic demand
- Expected lead times, including short?notice and emergency supply requirements

- Compliance obligations, including relevant Network Rail standards, drawings and Product Acceptance requirements
- Preferred site location considerations to support same?day and nationwide delivery capability

The following supporting documents will be made available as part of the engagement:

- Network Rail Technical Specification for the Design, Assembly and Testing of Glued Insulated Rail Joints (November 2025)

- Standards:

- RT/CE/S/023 Insulated Rail Joints

- RT/CE/S/050 Process for Cold?Expanding New Fishbolt Holes by the Split Sleeve Method (NR/SP/TRK/050)

- NR/L3/TRK/4004 Switch and Crossing Assemblies

- RE/PW Drawings:

- RE/PW/624 (Twisted Closure Rails)

- RE/PW/549 (95RBH)

- RE/PW/792 (CEN56E1)

- RE/PW/979 (CEN60E2)

- NR/L2/TRK/2049 Track Design Handbook

Product Acceptance (PA) is required before supply may commence. PA activities may form part of mobilisation, and the contract will not move into delivery until PA is fully approved by Network Rail. Suppliers will be expected to support the PA process by providing the necessary technical documentation, evidence and sample materials as required.

Suppliers are invited to review the Information Document and complete the questionnaire within the PQQ. The information gathered will help Network Rail understand current market capability, production capacity, compliance readiness and the ability to meet the supply requirements for IRJs and Closure Rails.

This market engagement is issued for information?gathering purposes only and does not

constitute a call for competition, nor does participation or non-participation affect eligibility for any future procurement opportunity.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2032
- Possible extension to 31 March 2034
- 7 years

Main procurement category

Goods

CPV classifications

- 34941000 - Rails and accessories
- 34941200 - Track rails
- 34946110 - Rails

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

17 March 2026

Engagement process description

Network Rail is undertaking a market engagement exercise to understand current market interest, capability, and capacity for the manufacture and supply of Insulated Rail Joints (IRJs) and Rail Ancillaries (Closure Rails). These goods will be required to be manufactured to specified standards, supplied in varying lengths and configurations, and delivered to meet both planned and emergency operational requirements.

This engagement aims to gather information from suppliers who have the technical capability, production capacity, and supply-chain readiness to support Network Rail's ongoing operational and maintenance requirements.

The Information Document provides detailed information regarding:

- Background to the requirement
- Technical specifications for IRJs and Closure Rails
- Applicable rail types, joint types, and manufacturing processes
- Anticipated monthly and annual volumes
- Lead time expectations, including emergency call-off requirements
- Compliance obligations, standards, drawings and Product Acceptance processes
- Preferred site location considerations to support nationwide delivery

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- Standards:
 - RT/CE/S/023 Insulated Rail Joints
 - RT/CE/S/050 Process for Cold-Expanding New Fishbolt Holes by the Split Sleeve Method (NR/SP/TRK/050)

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Product Acceptance (PA) is required before supply may commence. PA activities may form part of mobilisation, and the contract will not move into delivery until PA is fully approved by Network Rail. Suppliers will be expected to support the PA process by providing the necessary technical documentation, evidence and sample materials as required.

Suppliers are invited to review the Information Document and complete the questionnaire available within the PQQ. Responses will be used for information gathering purposes only and will help Network Rail assess market maturity, capability and potential capacity ahead of any future procurement activity. This engagement does not constitute a call for competition.

During the engagement window, suppliers may submit clarification questions using the correspondence function within Bravo. All clarification responses will be issued through the portal to ensure fairness and transparency.

There are currently no scheduled in person or virtual engagement events. However, Network Rail may hold additional sessions depending on supplier interest or the need for further technical discussion.

Instructions for suppliers:

- Access, download and review the Information Document and Questionnaire via the Bravo portal: <https://networkrail.bravosolution.co.uk> under 'Current Opportunities'.
- Submit clarification questions through the Bravo correspondence function before the clarification deadline.
- Complete and return the questionnaire by 17:00 on the engagement deadline date.

- Ensure responses provide accurate information relating to capability, capacity, compliance status and delivery feasibility.

Network Rail welcomes participation from all interested suppliers, including established manufacturers, innovators and potential new entrants to the market. Responses received will inform future strategy and ensure the supply chain is well positioned for potential forthcoming opportunities.

Non-participation in this market engagement will not preclude any organisation from taking part in future procurement processes. Should a formal procurement exercise be launched, Network Rail will publish a tender notice as a call for competition.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

19 June 2026

Procedure

Special regime

Utilities

Contracting authority

NETWORK RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PNZN-9524-VCQJ

Waterloo General Office

London

SE1 8SW

United Kingdom

Contact name: Shazea Hussain

Email: shazea.hussain@networkrail.co.uk

Website: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/>

Region: UKI45 - Lambeth

Organisation type: Public authority - central government