



National Investigation Body (NIB) Network

NIB Peer Review Report for NIB Latvia

Review date: 19- 20 May 2026

Peer Review Report - Record of changes

The following table records changes **during completion of individual NIB Peer Review Reports**. Modifications to the template (ie modifications to the report template) are tracked through the Handbook document control record.

Version	Date	Changes
V0.1	2026-05-20	1 st draft report – (on site meeting)
V0.2	2026-06-04	2 nd draft report – (email consultation)
V0.3	2026-07-30	3 rd draft report- with final comments (email)
V0.4	2026-07-31	Final report

On behalf of the Peer-review Panel

PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

This report describes a Peer Review of a National Investigating Body (NIB) undertaken to meet the requirements of Article 22(7) of the European Directive on Rail Safety dated 11 May 2016 (EU) 2016/798. The Article states that:

The investigating bodies, with the support of the Agency in accordance with Article 38(2) of Regulation (EU) 2016/796, shall establish a programme of peer reviews where all investigating bodies are encouraged to participate so as to monitor their effectiveness and independence.

The investigating bodies, with the support of the secretariat referred to in Article 38(2) of Regulation (EU) 2016/796, shall publish:

- (a) the common Peer Review programme and the review criteria; and
- (b) an annual report on the programme, highlighting identified strengths and suggestions for improvements.

The annual Peer Review reports shall be provided to the Agency. The Peer Review reports for individual NIB shall be published on a voluntary basis.

The Peer Review seeks to monitor the effectiveness and independence of a NIB by considering its organisation, processes and outputs (eg accident reports, safety recommendations, annual reports). The Peer Review process also seeks to assist development of all NIBs by sharing with them strengths and suggestions for improvements identified during reviews.

The Peer Review is based on the NIB responses to a questionnaire and on a site visit in which peer reviewers visit the NIB. Details of the questionnaire and the review criteria are given in the NIB Peer Review Handbook for the year in which the review was carried out. This can be found at [\[https://www.era.europa.eu/agency/stakeholder-relations/national-investigation-bodies/nib-network-european-network-rail-accidents-national-investigation-bodies_en\]](https://www.era.europa.eu/agency/stakeholder-relations/national-investigation-bodies/nib-network-european-network-rail-accidents-national-investigation-bodies_en).

The Peer Review relies on answers given by the NIB in the questionnaire and during the site visit. The Peer Review process is not intended to fully investigate all issues covered by the questionnaire and does not address all issues in the documents used as review criteria. It is targeted at issues where the reviewers believe there will be greatest value to the NIB being reviewed and to other NIBs.

This Peer Review report has been prepared by the NIB peer review team in the frame of the common peer-review programme established by the investigating bodies in accordance with Article 22(7) of the Directive (EU) 2016/798 on railway safety.

The NIB peer review team examined data during the peer review of the NIB using the process described in the Peer Review Handbook. The collection of data was based on the review of some documents, internal procedures or case studies provided on a voluntary basis, as well as on interviews with management and other staff members of the NIB.

The report reflects the collective judgement of the peer-review team regarding the findings resulting from the peer-review process. However, the individual members of the peer-review team and their NIBs are not liable for the contents of the report and/or for any omissions.

The peer review report is owned by the reviewed NIB and shall not be published or supplied to other parties without the prior written consent of this NIB.

PART 2 – BACKGROUND AND STATISTICS

The information in the following tables is taken from the completed questionnaire.

Table A – NIB & Review Information	
National Investigation Body (NIB)	Transport Accident and Incident Bureau Republic of Latvia
NIB type (eg multi-modal)	Multi-modal: railway, aviation and maritime
Date questionnaire completed by NIB	23 March 2026
Date of site visit	19-20 May 2026
Date of draft report for consultation	04.06.2026
Date of comments by NIB Latvia	30.07.2026
Date report finalised by Peer Review Panel	31.07.2026
Peer Review Panel members (name/state)	1. Mircea Nicolescu (NIB RO) (leader) 2. Petr Menci (NIB CZ) 3. Moritz Metzler (NIB DE)
Observers (name/state)	1. Sarah Young (Agency (ERA)) 2. José Antonio Pañero Huerga (NIB ES) 3. Märt Ots (NIB EE) 4. Evangelhos Tsalis – (HBMCI GR)
Route length of track in NIB's country	1831
Traffic in NIB's country (train-kilometres per year)	Passenger: 741 passenger kilometers Freight: 4788 million tonne-kilometers

Table B – NIB Staffing		
B1	Number of permanently employed rail investigators (including part time workers).	2
B2	Full time equivalent number of permanently employed rail investigators.	0
B3	Full time equivalent number of administrative staff permanently employed on rail investigators.	2 (juridical and economical support staff for all transports modes)
B4	Number permanently employed rail investigators who can act as Investigator in Charge.	2
B5	Are there investigators not permanently employed by the NIB who can be employed on an ad hoc basis. Briefly explain the contractual arrangements.	0
B6	Full time equivalent number of investigators from other modes that can assist rail investigators	4

* the number is a result a 'pro-rata allocation' of the total admin teams hours to rail

Table C – NIB Activity in the Last 3 Years (includes any joint investigations)

		Heavy rail			Metro railways		Trams		Other (trolleybus, cable car, etc.)	
		Article 20(1) accidents	National law requirement outside Article 20(1)	Discretion to investigate other events	National law requirement	Discretion to investigate other events	National law requirement	Discretion to investigate other events	National law requirement	Discretion to investigate other events
C1	In NIB scope?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
C2	Number of notifications per year averaged over last 3 years									
C3	Average number of accidents investigated per year*			1,66						
C4	Average number of incidents investigated per year*	Not applicable to Article 20(1) investigations								
C5	Average number of full investigation reports published per year			1						
C6	Average number of briefing notes (or similar short documents) published per year									
C7	Average number of recommendations produced per year			1,33						

* includes accidents and incidents for which the NIB carries out significant investigation work (e.g. attends site and/or obtains significant amounts of evidence) but no full report, briefing note, etc. is published

Table D – Outcome of recommendation made during the last 5 Years

		Heavy Rail		Metro railways	Trams	Other (narrow gauge)
		Article 20(1) accidents	Other investigations			
D1	Proportion of recommendations implemented effectively within a reasonable* time period		70%			
D2	Proportion of recommendations implemented effectively but after an excessive delay*		30%			
D3	Proportion of recommendations reported as implemented but not implemented effectively*					
D4	Proportion of recommendations reported as not implemented					
	Total	100%	100%			

* 'reasonable time period', 'excessive delay' and 'not implemented effectively' refer to the NIB's opinion.

Table E - Number of joint investigations with other NIBs - Averaged over 3 Years		
E1	Deployed (Some or all work undertaken out of the office)	0
E2	Not deployed (All work undertaken from the office)	0

Table F - Number of ongoing investigations and average times to complete investigations		
F1	Investigations required by Article 20(1)	
F2	National law requirement outside Article 20(1)	3
F3	Non-mandatory accidents and incidents	-
F4	Other investigations (e.g. class investigation)	
F5	Average time to complete mandatory investigations (average of investigations completed in previous three years) Reports published 2019 - 2022	15 months
F6	Average time to complete non-mandatory investigations ((average of investigations completed in previous three years) Reports published 2019 - 2022	

Comments of NIB on data provided in tables A to F and strengths and difficulties that it identifies itself

PART 3 – COMMENTS FROM PEER REVIEW PANEL

Legal framework (100 series questions in questionnaire)

- Current national legislation is generally consistent with the requirements in Directive (EU) 2016/798 for the NIB.
- The NIB is an independent multimodal (including aviation, railway and seagoing vessels) accident investigation organisation. The NIB is an institution under administrative supervision of the Minister for Transport.
- The top management of the NIB is a director who is appointed and removed by the Minister for Transport based on the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers (the highest executive body in the country – a collegial authority formed by the key ministers).
- With the exception for the criteria for civil servants there are no other specific criteria for nominating the director of the NIB nor are there are criteria for removing him/her.
- The director establishes the internal organisational structure of the NIB and has to report, at least annually, on the fulfilment of the functions of the NIB and the utilisation of the financial grants.
- The Investigation Bureau of the NIB consist of 3 operational specialised investigation departments: Aviation, Railway, and Maritime and staff providing support functions (economic and juridical). Each operational department has 2 specialised members of staff (one head of department and one investigator). At the time of the peer review both positions of the railway department were occupied. Both members of the railway department, have extensive experience in the railway field. For investigations that require special expertise the NIB can use external experts.
- The national legislation provides that the NIB shall investigate all serious railway accidents and may also investigate other railway accidents which are not a serious railway accident, inter alia, technical defects of interoperability constituents of the European Union railway system and such incidents which, in other circumstances, could have caused a serious railway accident or a significant accident.
- The national legislation gives the NIB right to have immediate access to the site. The NIB has a general agreement for cooperation with judicial authorities. The NIB representatives stated that up until now the cooperation with judicial authorities has been very good.
- The national legislation gives the NIB the possibility during the investigation to seize parts, documentation and other types of evidence.
- The NIB investigator has the power to access the accident site and exchange information with officials who are authorised to perform pre-trial criminal procedures.

Type of investigations undertaken & NIB organisation (200 series questions)

- The NIB investigates occurrences as provided for in Article 20(1) (serious accidents) and 20(2) (other accidents and incidents at the discretion of the NIB) of Directive (EU) 2016/798 in the railway field.
- The national legislation includes Regulation for the classification, and registration railway traffic accidents. For decision to start other investigation than serious accidents NIB conduct preliminary investigations and are using NIB Network Guidance.
- At the moment of the peer review mission the NIB was working on a class investigation related level crossing accidents.
- The NIB cooperates with other NIBs through NIB network meetings, workshops and expert groups
- The NIB is a member of the Road Safety Council. The Council's Think Tank was established to facilitate expert-level discussions on policy options, the analysis of best practices, and to ensure continuity in the implementation of road safety measures between formal Council meetings.
- The NIB delivers training for other organisations (e.g. the Police) to explain the NIB's role.
- The performance of the investigators is assessed according to Regulation on the Evaluation of the Work Performance of Employees in Direct State Administration Institutions.
- There are no specific methods in practice for monitoring the NIB's performance

Resources (300 series questions)

- Based on the information provided by the NIB it can be considered that it has sufficient financial and logistical resources.
- To ensure the operational activities of the NIB it receives funding in accordance with the Railway Law. The funding corresponds to 0.31% of the total amount of railway infrastructure funding provided by State.
- If necessary, for large-scale investigations, additional funding can be requested.
- The NIB has its offices in Riga and has a common (for all transport modes) dedicated facility (a hangar in the vicinity of Riga Airport) for the secure storage of evidence such as wreckage, equipment, components etc.
- The NIB has two cars that can be used by the investigators for all transports modes. The railway investigators therefore have access to transportation that allows them to go onsite in a timely manner.

- The representatives of the NIB expressed, during the discussions, that the number of the railway investigators are sufficient in proportion to the length of the railway network and the traffic. However, they indicated that it would be helpful if a human factors specialist was added to the NIB staff as it would help them further improve the quality of the investigations and ensure the independence (they raised some concerns regarding the lack of available external experts in this field e.g. risk that the same expert would also work for RUs/IM).
- There is always one investigator on-call 24/7, 365 days a year on a rotating basis. The on-duty investigator is contactable by phone. After receiving a notification, the on-call investigator contacts the concerned IM and/or RU by mobile phone for further details and decides if it is necessary to go on site. Generally external experts are not used for the on-site part of the investigation. For big accidents, or if one of the railway investigators is unavailable (holiday, etc). In these cases, also the investigators from the other transport modes can provide support.
- The head of railway department and the railway investigator can both act as the investigator in charge (IIC). The NIB has internal procedures and orders that define the roles, responsibilities, and the response steps for dealing with typical accidents.
- All nominated IICs have relevant experience in railway accident investigation, including practical field investigation experience.
- The NIB has no standing arrangement with external experts. The NIB maintains lists of experts who have given prior consent to be contacted. This allows them to deploy the required resources relatively quickly once availability is confirmed. The following is ensured through the contract: by signing the agreement, all involved parties formally confirm their competence, independence, and obligation to maintain confidentiality of the results.
- Downloads from On train Data recorders and other devices are extracted directly from their original storage location by the NIB, or by an expert under the NIBs supervision.
- The average time for finalising an investigation is about 15 months which is slightly longer than the recommended time frame of one year. Normally the budget and the internal resources are sufficient to allow a timely production of the investigation reports,. However, external tests and/or laboratory analysis can delay the completion of the reports.

Training arrangements (400 series questions)

- The internal procedures specify minimum requirements for candidates when the NIB recruits investigators: Investigators must hold a degree from a higher technical education institution and have at least five years of relevant professional experience in the railway or transport safety sector
- The effectiveness and competence of the investigators are monitored through performance reviews, supervision during investigations, feedback from completed investigations and periodic assessment of training needs, which are used to plan further training and competence development.

- Training for new investigators is organised progressively and tailored to individual competencies and the requirements of the NIB. This includes introductory training, basic investigation skills and task-specific on-the-job learning supported by experienced investigators.
- The two NIB railway investigators, have each more than 15 years of professional experience in the railway sector. They have completed a wide range of investigation-related training courses in different countries and possess extensive practical and theoretical knowledge. Trainings that they have attended include: Fundamentals of accident investigation – Cranfield University, Transportation Safety Institute – USA.
- Training courses are evaluated by participants after completion. Feedback is reviewed by the NIB and used to inform future training decisions and recommendations.

Notification & decision process (500 series questions)

- National legislation and the NIB reporting regulation require railway undertakings and infrastructure managers to immediately notify the NIB of accidents and events as specified in Article 20(1) - (2) of Directive (EU) 2016/798.
- The NIB reporting regulation specifies which additional accidents and incidents must be reported immediately, either by telephone or by other agreed means.
- National legislation specifies the format and content of notifications and defines deadlines for reporting events that do not require immediate notification.
- Initial notifications are usually provided by telephone for urgent events and by email for reports that can be submitted the following working day. In addition, all information is entered and updated in an online accident database, ensuring that details are complete and continuously accessible. The database is managed by the NSA and the NIB has access to it.
- For events that do not require immediate notification, the reporting regulation defines that a written report must be submitted by the following working day.
- The NIB maintains a 24/7 on-call duty system, ensuring year-round availability. At least one investigator is always on standby and can be reached.
- The criteria for deciding to investigate are consistent with Article 20(1) - 20(2) of Directive (EU) 2016/798 and include any event with potential safety significance. The decision-making team includes the investigator present on-site, the department head, and the head of the NIB.
- The final decision on whether to investigate, and on the scope of the investigation, is made by the head of the NIB, based on the investigator's recommendation

- The notification for opening an investigation is sent to all stakeholders, NSA and ERA.

Evidence collection and analysis (600 series questions)

- The NIB investigators are trained to manage the site, including the evidence collection.
Investigators from other transport modes can support for managing the occurrence site e.g. collecting evidence on-site.
- Evidence is identified, collected, recorded, and preserved in cooperation with relevant parties. Photographic records, measurements, documentation, and statements are gathered as appropriate.
- The legislation provides for immediate and unrestricted access to all relevant evidence, as defined by the NIB.
- Investigators are granted access to data from on-train data recorders, signalling systems, and voice recorders as soon as the data is available and its retrieval does not interfere with emergency or judicial activities.
- Investigators are able to interview train staff and other relevant railway personnel, as well as representatives of infrastructure managers and railway undertakings, at the earliest appropriate opportunity
- The NIB has the power to order confiscation, house searches, medical examination, analysing the data from recording devices, and to carry out interviews.
- The NIB has had no difficulty in obtaining evidence on site and access to physical evidence. Also, access to data from data recorders has also been easily facilitated. However, in one case the NIB mentioned that they had difficulty obtaining the necessary data for rolling stock design after the on-site as the RU cited commercial confidentiality for the requested documents.
- The NIB has full access to staff and any relevant managers.
- Cooperation with judicial authorities during both on-site and off-site activities has functioned smoothly, enabling investigators to collect evidence and conduct interviews without obstruction.
- Victims and relatives are kept informed of key milestones in the investigation, in line with confidentiality and data protection requirements. Before the investigation is finalised, victims and relatives receive the draft (preliminary) investigation report.

Report preparation and publication (700 series questions)

- The investigation reports follow the structure imposed by Regulation (EU) 2020/572
- The NIB publishes on its website information regarding the opening of each investigation and there is a list of all events being investigated.

- The structure of the two reports that were presented and studied by the peer review team comply with the Annex to Regulation (EU) 2020/572. They are very well technically documented and are going deeper in investigating systemic issues and HOF factors.
- The NIB takes into account the NIB Network publication “Guidance on good reporting practice” and use it as a reference to support a structured reporting and consistency across investigations.
- Investigation reports are reviewed and authorised through an internal review process within the NIB rather than by a formal standing committee. The review is carried out by senior investigators and/or the NIB’s legal counsel to ensure the compliance quality, accuracy and consistency of the report.
- Before final approval, the draft report is circulated to relevant parties for comments on factual accuracy, in accordance with the applicable legal framework.
- Final investigation reports are normally published as soon as possible but can take longer than one year, depending on the complexity and scope of the investigation.
- The investigation reports and annual reports are published on the NIB website and sent to ERA.

Handling safety recommendations (800 series questions)

- The safety recommendations (SRs) are included in the draft report which is sent to all involved parties as part of the consultation process. This enhances the likely acceptance of the safety recommendations.
- The NIB monitors the responses to safety recommendations through annual updates submitted by the responsible authorities and organisations. If updates are not received within a reasonable timeframe—typically by the anniversary of the recommendation or the annual reporting cycle—the NIB requests the missing information to ensure that progress is tracked.
- All safety recommendations issued in the last 3 years have been accepted and most are implemented, fully or in part, or are in the process of implementation.

Health & safety of investigators (900 series questions)

- Standard health and safety equipment is provided to investigators by the NIB - there are 2 sets available, one in the office, one in the current location of the investigator. This facilitates a rapid deployment.
- The investigators have general health and safety training and specific training for working on rail premises.
- Mental health support, including counselling for stress, or other psychological impacts, is provided by an external professional service to ensure the investigators’ well-being.

Actions taken by the NIB relevant to the Peer Review findings (if any).
Panel comments on effectiveness
• The NIB performs the work that is required by national legislation. • The average time for publication of the reports slightly exceeds 12 months but this mainly depends on the use of external expertise. • Recommendations for the improvement of safety and prevention of similar accidents are issued as required. Recommendations are drafted objectively and clearly identify the safety objective and the end-implementer. All recently issued safety recommendations have been accepted. • The annual report is published in the required timescale (before 30 September every year). • The notification process of accidents and incidents is well established through national regulation. The NIB has access to the national notification database that is managed by the NSA. • The NIB is an active participant in the NIB community.
Panel comments on independence
• The Panel considers that the NIB works in practice with a high degree of independence. • The director of the NIB is appointed and removed by the Minister for Transport based on the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers (the highest executive body in the country - collegial authority formed by the key ministers). • With the exception for the criteria for civil servants there are no specific criteria for nominating the director of the NIB and there are no criteria for removing him/her. This could have a potential impact on the NIB independence. • The director of the NIB is free to decide which (non-mandatory) events to investigate, the scope of the investigations, how the investigations are conducted and the drafting of reports. • The NIB successfully carries out independent investigations to a good standard.

Identification of strengths
✓ Very well organised notification process and a database containing information on all accidents and incidents managed by the NSA. The NIB has access to the database. ✓ They can react very quickly to travel to the accident site. ✓ Good standard of the investigation reports. ✓ The organization benefits from effective cross-departmental collaboration – for example, in the areas of professional development, accident site management and proofreading. ✓ A good training process, and the investigators receive adequate training opportunities. ✓ The recent initiative to perform a cross cutting (thematic) investigation for level crossing accidents and incidents can enable the NIB to see issues that may not be apparent when looking at an isolated accident/incident..
Identification of areas where improvements are suggested
❖ The Panel suggests that the national legislation should include criteria for appointment and removal of the head of the NIB as a guarantee of a high-level independence of the NIB. ❖ The staffing level of two investigators does not allow for the coverage of all relevant railway sectors. The Panel suggests the NIB should consider the need to recruit a permanent human factors expert. It could help to improve the quality and independence of the investigation reports. The human factors expert would not necessarily need to be dedicated to the railway department but could be resource supporting all transport modes in the NIB.
Additional comments by the Panel (if any).
• The Panel would like to thank and show its appreciation to the NIB for volunteering to be peer-reviewed and for the openness and courtesy with which was received. • The onsite visit was appreciated as an opportunity for peer review team to learn about good practices from the NIB.

PART 4 – COMMENTS FROM NIB

Comments by the NIB (if any).

On behalf of the National Investigation Body of Latvia, I would like to thank the assessment team and the observers for their excellent work, professionalism, and cooperation throughout the peer review process. We greatly appreciate your dedication and valuable contribution to the preparation of this report.