EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

THE RAILWAYS (INTEROPERABILITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND) (CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL CARRIAGE BY RAIL) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2026

2026 No. [XXXX]

1. Introduction

1.1 This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Department for Transport and is laid before Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

1.2 This memorandum contains information for the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments and the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee.

2. Declaration

2.1 Lord Peter Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE, the Minister of State for Transport at the Department for Transport, confirms that this Explanatory Memorandum meets the required standard.

2.2 Jeremy Hotchkiss, Deputy Director for Rail Regulation, Standards & Innovation, at the Department for Transport, confirms that this Explanatory Memorandum meets the required standard.

3. Contact

3.1 James Le Grice, Head of Rail Safety and Standards, at the Department for Transport can be contacted by email at the following address with any queries regarding the instrument: interoperability@dft.gov.uk.

Part One: Explanation, and context, of the Instrument

4. Overview of the Instrument

What does the legislation do?

4.1 These Regulations establish the conditions and technical specifications that railway equipment (including component products, subsystems of the railway system and parts thereof) must satisfy before they can be placed on the market in Northern Ireland or put into service in a manner consistent with the Interoperability Directive (EU) 2016/797 ("the 2016 Directive").

4.2 The Regulations ensure that the rail interoperability regime in Northern Ireland reflects the obligations placed on the UK by the Windsor Framework[1] with respect to Northern Ireland, which provides for Northern Ireland's access to the EU Single Market for goods, and sets out Northern Ireland's post-Brexit relationship with the EU and Great Britain.

4.3 These Regulations also amend regulation 2 of the Railways (Convention on International Carriage by Rail) Regulations 2005[2] (the '2005 Regulations'), which give effect in UK law to the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail

[1] The objectives of the Framework were set out in the Safeguarding the Union Command paper, published in January 2024.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65ba3b7bee7d490013984a59/Command_Paper__1_.pdf
[2] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/2092/regulation/2/made

(the Convention), a multilateral agreement to facilitate cross-border rail services, as amended by the Vilnius Protocol of 1999. The 2005 Regulations were made under Section 103 of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003. The amendments to regulation 2 codify the UK's reservation against Appendix E[3] of the Convention and give effect in UK law to Appendix H[4], which came into force on 26 September 2018 and which the UK is obliged to implement.

Where does the legislation extend to, and apply?

4.4 The extent of this instrument (that is, the jurisdiction(s) which the instrument forms part of the law of) is England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

4.5 Regulation 51 extends to Northern Ireland only.

4.6 The territorial application of this instrument varies between provisions.

5. Policy Context

What is being done and why?

5.1 These Regulations create a separate rail interoperability framework for Northern Ireland based on the 2016 Directive to meet the UK Government's commitments on the regulation of rail equipment in Northern Ireland in accordance with the Windsor Framework.

5.2 Interoperability aims to reduce costs and provide safe and uninterrupted movement of trains across the EU through greater compatibility between subsystems and constituent equipment of the overall EU rail system. The current UK-wide rail interoperability framework is set through the Railways (Interoperability) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 2011/3066) ("RIR 2011"), which transposed EU Interoperability Directive (Directive 2008/57/EC), the ("2008 Directive"). The original aims of this legislation were to:

- create a framework of common standards in Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs) based on a set of underlying essential requirements for the interoperability of the railway;
- ensure compatibility between European railways to allow for through running of trains between Member States;
- harmonise Member State design, assessment, acceptance and approval processes through a common process for the authorisation of infrastructure and rolling stock against TSI requirements;
- prevent barriers to trade and promote a single European market for railway products and services; and
- deliver the benefits of standardisation through economies of scale for railway components, improving the economic performance of European railways and the environmental performance of the whole European transport system.

5.3 Following the UK's withdrawal from the EU, the Government made several amendments to RIR 2011 in 2019 and 2020[5] to ensure the interoperability framework

[3] Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of Use of Infrastructure in International Rail Traffic (Appendix E, COTIF https://www.otif.org/fileadmin/docs/LegalTexts/COTIF/COTIF1999/COTIF_1999_01_07_2015_e_CUI.pdf)

[4] Uniform Rules concerning the Safe Operation of Trains in International Traffic (Appendix H, COTIF https://otif.org/fileadmin/docs/LegalTexts/COTIF/COTIF1999/NOT-18001-Ad2-fde-Appendice-H-EST.pdf)

[5] There were several amendments to the RIR 2011 made in 2019 and 2020 by the Railways (Interoperability) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, the Railways (Safety, Access, Management and Interoperability)

continued to work as intended, while reflecting the UK's position outside of the EU. These amendments included: (a) a new power for the Secretary of State to publish National Technical Specification Notices (NTSNs) to replace the TSIs adopted by the European Commission as the mandatory specifications for interoperability, and (b) a new power for the Secretary of State to publish a list of National Technical Rules ("NTRs") setting network-specific requirements, whilst removing the requirement for GB to notify them to the European Commission.

5.4 Simultaneously, between 2017 and 2020, EU Member States were moving to adopt the 2016 Directive setting out a new interoperability framework. This aimed to support a Single European Rail Area by consolidating more responsibility with the EU Agency for Railways ("the Agency") and regulating rail vehicles as products for trade on the Single Market. The UK did not transpose the 2016 Directive before its withdrawal from the EU. However, due to its relevance for trade in rail equipment, the UK committed in the Windsor Framework to apply it in Northern Ireland "*insofar as conditions and technical specifications for the placing on the market, putting into service and free movement of railway products are concerned*." (paragraph 28 of Annex II of the Windsor Framework).[6]

5.5 These Regulations transpose the 2016 Directive, creating an interoperability framework for Northern Ireland that meets this commitment in the following ways:

- **Common standards with the EU:** The Regulations refer to TSIs, rather than NTSNs, as the applicable rail interoperability specifications for Northern Ireland, eliminating the need for the existing Northern Ireland NTSN. They also require network-specific requirements set out in national rules to be notified to the European Commission.
- **Authorisation to place on the market:** The Regulations introduce the concept of an authorisation to place vehicles on the market. This reflects that under the 2016 Directive, the purpose of a vehicle authorisation is to allow the vehicle to be sold to the intended user, rather than just to be placed into service. The authorisation will be sought by the manufacturer (not the intended user). The processes and procedures for obtaining an authorisation are largely the same and there is a similar level of evidence of compliance as required under the 2008 Directive (i.e. compliance with TSIs, notified national rules and compatibility with infrastructure based on the data within the register of infrastructure).
- **Additional vehicle authorisation requirements:** The Regulations introduce the concept of a change in 'area of use of a vehicle', i.e. a change in the network or networks within an EU Member State or group of Member States in which a vehicle is intended to be used. A change in area of use will also occur in the case of a vehicle that crosses the border on the island of Ireland. A vehicle already authorised to be placed on the market under the 2016 Directive will need an updated vehicle authorisation if its area of use changes. A change of the area of use of vehicles authorised to be placed into service under RIR 2011, will trigger the need for a new authorisation to place on the market. The Regulations also implement new procedures set out in the 2016 Directive for determining whether a new vehicle authorisation is

(Miscellaneous Amendments and Transitional Provision) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, the Railways (Interoperability) (Miscellaneous Amendments and Revocations) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 and the Railways (Miscellaneous Amendments and Revocations and Transitional Provisions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020. An overview of the changes made to RIR 2011 by these EU exit instruments is available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/railways-interoperability-eu-exit-regulations

[6] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5da863ab40f0b659847e0184/Revised_Protocol_to_the_Withdrawal_Agreement.pdf

required because of a modification to a vehicle or vehicle type. The details of these procedures and the roles and responsibilities of each person or entity involved are set out in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/545 establishing practical arrangements for the issuing of vehicle authorisations and railway vehicle type authorisations, as it applies in EU law[7], to which the Regulations cross-refer.

- **Role of the Agency vs national safety authority in vehicle authorisations:** The Regulations require applicants to apply to the Agency for an authorisation to place on the market any vehicles intended to cross the border from Northern Ireland into Ireland, past the border stations. If vehicles are intended to be used in Northern Ireland only, applicants have a choice to apply to either the Agency or the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) as Northern Ireland's national safety authority for a vehicle authorisation.
- **Role of the Agency in digital signalling projects:** The Regulations require project tenders for European Rail Traffic Management System ("ERTMS") equipment, including European Train Control System ("ETCS") and/or Global System for Mobile Communications ("GSMR"), to be approved by the Agency. Command Control and Signalling subsystems incorporating this equipment cannot be authorised to be placed into service by the national safety authority unless the tender has first been approved by the Agency.
- **Use of the Agency's 'one-stop shop':** The EU has established an IT system to manage applications for vehicle authorisations and ERTMS tender approvals. These Regulations require applicants for these types of applications/approvals in Northern Ireland to use this 'one-stop shop' IT system.
- **Conformity assessment against TSIs and notified national rules:** The Regulations require the Secretary of State to notify and inform the European Commission of NI notified and NI designated bodies responsible for assessing railway equipment against relevant TSIs and national rules respectively. They set out the types of conformity assessment bodies (accredited, accredited in-house and non-accredited), the application process, and the criteria to be met, including impartiality, independence, and technical competence. The Secretary of State may delegate assessment and monitoring functions to the UK national accreditation body. The Regulations also make provision for:
    - fees (limited to a reasonable cost associated with the carrying out/performance of the required assessment) to be charged by an assessment body,
    - subcontracting and use of subsidiaries,
    - information-sharing with the European Commission, and
    - operational duties, including the suspension or withdrawal of certificates where technical requirements are not met.

5.6 As stated in paragraph 4.3 above, the Regulations also amend the 2005 Regulations to reflect the UK's current obligations as a contracting state to the Convention.

5.7 When the UK ratified the 1999 version of the Convention in 2006, it applied a reservation against Appendix E[8] (the Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of Use

[7] Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/545 of 4 April 2018 establishing practical arrangements for the railway vehicle authorisation and railway vehicle type authorisation process pursuant to Directive (EU) 2016/797 of the European Parliament and of the Council (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2018/545/oj/eng)

[8] Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of Use of Infrastructure in International Rail Traffic (Appendix E, COTIF https://www.otif.org/fileadmin/docs/LegalTexts/COTIF/COTIF1999/COTIF_1999_01_07_2015_e_CUI.pdf)

of Infrastructure in International Traffic, known as the CUI). This reservation reflected the then EU wide position that Appendix E did not align with the rail infrastructure access framework established under EU law. The UK's position was that implementing Appendix E would impose additional, onerous obligations on stakeholders and potentially conflict with legal obligations resulting from the UK's EU membership. It was anticipated that adopting Appendix E would have caused particular difficulties for UK infrastructure managers and operators such as Network Rail, HS1, Eurotunnel, Eurostar and international freight operators.

5.8 The Convention (pursuant to a derogation negotiated by the EU) recognises that Appendix E must not conflict with obligations arising under EU law, by disapplying certain parts of the CUI for EU Member States. This meant that while the UK remained an EU Member State, the practical impact of Appendix E on UK industry would have been limited.

5.9 Following the European Union's accession to the Convention in 2011, the European Commission encouraged Member States to withdraw reservations to maximise the EU's voting rights within the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF). In 2017, while still a Member State, the UK withdrew its reservation to Appendix E. At the same time, the UK formally indicated its intention to reinstate this reservation at the point when it left the EU. Full application of Appendix E, without the benefit of the derogation negotiated by the EU, would have required substantial renegotiation of international access contracts and could have imposed significant additional liability and insurance costs on industry. The UK consulted on whether to maintain the reservation in 2016 and 2017, confirming support from the industry to reinstate the reservation. Our new reservation for Appendix E took effect on 31 December 2018.

5.10 Therefore, the 2005 Regulations currently do not adequately reflect the UK's continuing reservation in relation to Appendix E, in legislation, as it applies following EU exit and must be amended to clarify the law.

5.11 These Regulations give effect to Appendix H[9] to the Convention (the Uniform Rules concerning the Safe Operation of Trains in International Traffic). Appendix H was adopted by the OTIF General Assembly in September 2018 and entered into force internationally on 26 September 2018. As a contracting state to the Convention, the UK is obliged to implement Appendix H unless it has lodged a formal reservation, which it has not done.

5.12 The 2005 Regulations do not currently provide for Appendix H, since it was adopted after the regulations were made. The 2005 Regulations must be amended to make clear that Appendix H has effect in UK law.

What was the previous policy, how is this different?

5.13 The previous interoperability requirements that applied in Northern Ireland were aligned with the rest of the UK under RIR 2011, the legislation implementing the 2008 Directive, as amended for EU Exit. Therefore, once these Regulations are in force, different mandatory specifications for rail interoperability will apply in Northern Ireland and Great Britain – TSIs (for NI) and NTSNs (for GB). This has been the practical arrangement since EU Exit, managed through non-legislative means (such as guidance) and, since June 2025, in part by an NTSN[10] published by the

[9] Uniform Rules concerning the Safe Operation of Trains in International Traffic (Appendix H, COTIF https://otif.org/fileadmin/docs/LegalTexts/COTIF/COTIF1999/NOT-18001-Ad2-fde-Appendice-H-EST.pdf)
[10] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6847d46a5e925395728061a4/ntsn-northern-ireland-issue-1.pdf

Secretary of State, mandating compliance with the TSIs in Northern Ireland. More practical differences between the regimes include the change from the requirement for authorisation to place vehicles into service to a requirement for authorisation to place vehicles on the market; the introduction of a role for the Agency in vehicle authorisations and ERTMS tender approvals; and different trigger points for additional vehicle authorisations. These reflect the key differences between the 2008 Directive (which the regime in Great Britain is more closely aligned with) and 2016 Directive (which the regime in Northern Ireland is aligned with).

5.14 Other differences between the applicable GB and NI law on rail interoperability that will be introduced by these Regulations reflect wider changes to conformity assessment body status agreed under the Windsor Framework. Under these Regulations, an approved body is a conformity assessment body in GB accredited to assess against NTSNs, an EU notified body is a conformity assessment body notified to the European Commission and accredited to assess against TSIs, and a designated body is accredited to assess against national rules. Previously a project seeking an authorisation to place a vehicle or infrastructure into service in Northern Ireland could use an approved body or an EU notified body to assess compliance against the requirements set out in the NTSNs or equivalent TSIs. However, a project must now use either an NI notified body (a conformity assessment body notified to the European Commission and accredited to assess against TSIs in Northern Ireland) appointed by the Secretary of State or an EU notified body to assess compliance with the TSIs in Northern Ireland. The assessment of compliance with notified national rules for all of the UK was previously carried out by designated bodies under RIR 2011. The notified national rules for Northern Ireland will now be assessed by NI designated bodies (bodies accredited to assess against national rules in Northern Ireland which have been notified to the European Commission).

6. Legislative and Legal Context

How has the law changed?

6.1 The interoperability regime for Northern Ireland is set out in these Regulations. It ensures the conditions and technical specifications that must be satisfied for the placing on the market, putting into service and free movement of railway products are consistent with the 2016 Directive, in accordance with our obligations under Article 5(4) and Annex II of the Windsor Framework.

6.2 A Transposition Note is included in the Annex to this Explanatory Memorandum. The Regulations do not ‘copy-out’ the relevant provisions of the 2016 Directive as this would have led to uncertainty about the scope of the Regulations and the roles and responsibilities of those affected. However, in some cases the technical provisions of EU instruments are implemented by cross referring to them in the Regulations.

6.3 These Regulations also amend regulation 2 of the 2005 Regulations to implement the UK’s obligations as a signatory of OTIF. Firstly, they implement the reservation against Appendix E entered by the UK Government to OTIF on 20 December 2017 and taking effect on 31 December 2018 (the background to which is explained in paragraphs 5.6 to 5.12).

6.4 Secondly, these Regulations implement Appendix H of the Convention, which was adopted by the OTIF General Assembly at its 13th session in September 2018.

Why was this approach taken to change the law?

6.5 The Regulations implement the Directive in Northern Ireland to comply with the UK Government's obligations under the Windsor Framework. As outlined in the Government's Safeguarding the Union command paper (published in January 2024)[11], it restores the smooth flow of trade within the UK internal market and safeguards Northern Ireland's place in the Union, including through arrangements affecting the application of EU-derived regulatory requirements. The Regulations will support the continued interoperability of the rail systems on the island of Ireland by implementing EU law in respect of the interoperability of the Northern Ireland rail system. This is not applicable in Great Britain, where RIR 2011 will continue to apply. To ensure clarity for those impacted by the interoperability regime, such as manufacturers of equipment for the railway in Northern Ireland, it was necessary to create a separate interoperability regime through a statutory instrument setting out the requirements that apply in Northern Ireland. There are no alternatives to implementing the 2016 Directive in Northern Ireland that meet the UK Government's obligations under the Windsor Framework. The Secretary of State published a Northern Ireland NTSN in June 2025 as a temporary measure to give effect to TSIs in Northern Ireland under the RIR 2011 framework. However, new legislation was necessary to implement the changes to the authorisation and conformity assessment regimes introduced by the 2016 Directive and the Windsor Framework.

6.6 These Regulations also implement the UK's obligations under the Convention, specifically reflecting a reservation against Appendix E and implementing Appendix H (see paragraph 4.3 and section 5). The 2005 Regulations are currently drafted so that Annexes A-G have effect in UK law. Consequently, amendments to the Convention are automatically recognised in domestic law unless they are amendments adopted by the General Assembly of OTIF, which require an express legislative update to have effect in UK law. The amendments adopted at the 12th and 13th General Assemblies of OTIF included the creation of a new Appendix H which must be expressly incorporated into UK law as the current UK legislation defines the Convention as comprising Appendices A to G only and therefore does not implement Appendix H for the UK. At the same time, the 2005 Regulations do not make it explicit that Appendix E does not apply in the UK. These Regulations are therefore required to clarify the UK's reservation against Appendix E and update the definition of the Convention and expressly provide for the application of Appendix H in UK law.

7. Consultation

Summary of consultation outcome and methodology

7.1 There are no alternative policy options because the UK is required to implement the 2016 Directive in accordance with the Windsor Framework.

7.2 The Department for Transport has not undertaken a formal consultation on the provisions included in this instrument because the changes only affect a small number of stakeholders in Northern Ireland, namely the DfI and Translink. The Department for Transport has worked closely with the DfI and Translink to explain the changes and seek feedback on the approach to implementing the 2016 Directive in accordance with the Windsor Framework. This included hosting a workshop and issuing a survey

[11] Safeguarding the Union command paper (published in January 2024) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65ba3b7bee7d490013984a59/Command_Paper__1_.pdf

to gather the views of the DfI and Translink. Both have expressed broad support for the proposed approach adopted by the Department for Transport.

7.3 On the amendments to the 2005 Regulations, the UK did not carry out a formal public consultation on the general amendments to the Convention because these had already been agreed at OTIF General Assemblies by a UK representative. For the reservation, the Government held informal discussions with relevant stakeholders in 2016 and 2017 and again in 2023, to confirm whether the reservation remained appropriate. Stakeholders, including industry bodies and operators affected by international rail traffic, supported maintaining the reservation, and this feedback informed the approach taken in these Regulations.

8. Applicable Guidance

8.1 Guidance will be produced by the DfI in accordance with regulation 4 to coincide with this instrument coming into force to support stakeholders in Northern Ireland on how to obtain an authorisation in Northern Ireland.

8.2 No specific guidance has been issued in relation to amendments to the Convention because those amendments are intended to apply directly and uniformly across all Contracting States, without national reinterpretation. The UK's legislative framework gives effect to the Convention and its amendments as they enter into force for the United Kingdom.

Part Two: Impact and the Better Regulation Framework

9. Impact Assessment

9.1 We have prepared a De Minimis Impact Assessment for these Regulations. A full Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument because of the low level of impact per business.

Impact on businesses, charities and voluntary bodies

9.2 There is no, or no significant, impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies because the main impact is upon the working practices of DfI and Translink.

9.3 The legislation does not impact small or micro businesses.

9.4 There is no, or no significant, impact on the public sector because of the minimal impact on the working practices of DfI operating as a safety authority for Northern Ireland. These amendments have no direct impact on their own, rather they clarify the appendices of the Convention that apply in the UK.

10. Monitoring and review

What is the approach to monitoring and reviewing this legislation?

10.1 To the extent that this instrument is made under Section 8C of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, and under enabling powers in the Transport Act 2000 and the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003, this instrument does not require a statutory review clause. In line with the requirements of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE has made the following statement: It would be disproportionate taking into account the economic impact of the regulatory provision on the qualifying activity, to conduct a review.

10.2 A de-minimis impact assessment has been prepared in relation to these Regulations, and it has concluded that the financial impact of the regulatory provisions they contain, per annum will be significantly below £10 million. The financial impact of the Regulations has not been monetised because the impact is thought to be too low to allow for an accurate assessment.

Part Three: Statements and Matters of Particular Interest to Parliament

11. Matters of special interest to Parliament

11.1 Regulations 26, 41 and 42 make provision to allow DfI, the Secretary of State, NI notified bodies and designated bodies to recover a fee in connection with the carrying out of their functions as required in these Regulations. This is consistent with the ability to recover fees under RIR 2011 framework and does not represent a new fee charging ability where none existed previously.

12. European Convention on Human Rights

12.1 The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE, has made the following statement regarding Human Rights: "In my view the provisions of the Railways (Interoperability in Northern Ireland) (Convention on International Carriage by Rail) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 are compatible with the Convention rights."

13. The Relevant European Union Acts

13.1 This instrument is made under Section 8C of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 and therefore relates to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union. The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE has made, below, the relevant statements under the 2018 Act.

13.2 **Appropriateness statement**

The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE has made the following statement regarding use of legislative powers in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018:

"In my view the Railways (Interoperability in Northern Ireland) (Convention on International Carriage by Rail) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 does no more than is appropriate".

13.3 **Good reasons**

The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE has made the following statement regarding use of legislative powers in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018:

"In my view there are good reasons for the provisions in this instrument, and I have concluded they are a reasonable course of action".

13.4 **Equalities**

The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE has made the following statement(s):

"The draft instrument does not amend, repeal or revoke a provision or provisions in the Equality Act 2006 or the Equality Act 2010 or subordinate legislation made under those Acts.

The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE has made the following statement regarding use of legislative powers in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018:

"In relation to the draft instrument, I, The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE have had due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.".

13.5 **Criminal offences**

The Minister of State for Transport, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill CBE has made the following statement regarding use of legislative powers in the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018:

"In my view there are good reasons for the creation of a criminal offence and for the penalty in respect of it in the Railways (Interoperability in Northern Ireland) (Convention on International Carriage by Rail) (Amendment) Regulations 2026."

These Regulations must create criminal offences to comply with our obligation to implement the 2016 Directive in the UK with respect to Northern Ireland. These offences will also ensure that vehicles, interoperability constituents and infrastructure comply with technical standards, which contributes to passenger safety. Similar offences have applied to Northern Ireland to date in respect of the Railways Interoperability Regulations 2011 and have been recreated under these Regulations, to ensure parity across the UK in relation to similar breaches of interoperability requirements.