

RAILBELT RELIABILITY COUNCIL – POLICIES & PROCEDURES		POLICY NO.: P-08
TITLE: PUBLIC COMMENT INTAKE POLICY		REVISION NO.: 0
EFFECTIVE: 08/07/2023	LAST AMENDED: 08/07/2023	PAGE 1 OF 4

PUBLIC COMMENT INTAKE POLICY

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1.0 POLICY OVERVIEW

This policy establishes a clear and timely process for managing public comments provided to the RRC Board of Directors, Board Committees, and Technical Advisory Council (TAC) and Working Groups.

2.0 PURPOSE & SCOPE

This policy:

- 1) Establishes a process for managing public comments provided to the RRC;
- 2) Defines requirements for content and nature of comments submitted and distinguishes between formal and informal public comments;
- 3) Defines responsibilities for the RRC and commenters to ensure adherence to policy requirements.

This policy is also available on the RRC’s website: www.akrrc.org.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Board	RRC Board of Directors
RRC Committee	A committee, subcommittee, working group, task force, advisory committee, or other topic-specific group of the RRC, other than a Board Committee, that plays a role in RRC decision making
RRC	Railbelt Reliability Council
TAC	Technical Advisory Council
CEO	Chief Executive Officer

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY PERSONNEL

Title	Responsibilities
RRC Board Chair	The RRC Board Chair oversees compliance with this policy as it pertains to RRC Board business.
RRC Committee Chair	The RRC Committee Chair oversees compliance with this policy as it pertains to RRC Committee meetings.

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Title	Responsibilities
RRC Chief Executive Officer	The RRC Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in conjunction with the RRC Board Chair, oversees compliance with this policy.
Public Comment Managers	Public Comment Manager(s) (PCMs) are responsible for timely receipt acknowledgement of formal public comments, for reviewing public comments in the minutes of RRC meetings and including formal public comments in the records of their product developments or other RRC developments as appropriate, and otherwise ensuring compliance with this Policy and other applicable RRC Rules, Policies, and Procedures.
Commenters	Commenters are responsible for understanding and following this Policy and the RRC Public Comment and Meeting Attendance Policy (P-07).

5.0 POLICY CONTENT

5.1 Nature of Public Comments Provided to the RRC

Any person or entity may provide public comments to the RRC. All public comments provided to the RRC should conform to the RRC Public Comment and Meeting Attendance Policy (P-07). Comments violating that policy may be disregarded.

Commenters may provide formal public comments to the RRC:

- a. in person during a public comment period at an RRC meeting,
 - i. comments regarding matters being considered by the TAC or a TAC Working Group should be made at the appropriate meeting pursuant to PD-03 – Technical Advisory Council Structure and Process; P-07 – Public Comment and Meeting Attendance Policy.
 - ii. comments regarding any other RRC matter should be made at the appropriate RRC Board of Committee meeting;
- b. electronically on the appropriate website form available at www.akrrc.org, or as otherwise indicated on the website; or
- c. in writing delivered either by mail to the RRC's mailing address or by hand to the RRC's physical offices as they are published in it's Tariff.
 - i. written comments should clearly state the subject matter to which they relate and, if applicable, the TAC Working Group they should be directed to.

Comments submitted by means other than those specified in Section 5.1 of this Policy will be considered informal comments. Informal comments will not be treated by the RRC as public comments.

5.2 RRC Designated Public Comment Manager

Where possible and appropriate, the RRC individual responsible for a product development or RRC function should be the Public Comment Manager (PCM) for formal public comments about that product development or RRC function.

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The PCM for public comments addressed to the Board will be the Board Chair unless otherwise designated. Committee Chairs will serve as PCMs as appropriate for all public comments provided to their Board Committee. For all other matters, the RRC’s Chief Executive Officer or their designee shall serve as the PCM to efficiently manage formal public comments.

5.3 Managing Formal Public Comments

All public comments made during a public comment agenda item at an RRC meeting are deemed received and heard and no further RRC acknowledgement of receipt is required.

All written formal public comments submitted electronically through the RRC website will be automatically logged and confirmation will be sent to the commentor’s provided email address. After PCM review, a confirmation will be sent, and the comments will be made public as appropriate.

All written formal public comments received by mail or hand delivery will be logged upon receipt and routed to the appropriate PCM for review and action and a confirmation receipt will be sent by the same means received unless requested otherwise in the comment. The comment will be made public as appropriate under the Public Comment and Meeting Attendance Policy (P-07).

Upon receipt of a formal public comment, the PCM will:

- a. Promptly review the comment for conformance with the RRC Public Comment and Meeting Attendance Policy (P-07) and if the PCM concludes that the comment violates Section 4.0 of the policy, the comment may be disregarded. If a comment is disregarded, the commentor will be promptly informed that their comment has been disregarded, the nature of the violation, and that they may submit revised comments within established comment deadlines. This action by the RRC should be completed no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the comment by the RRC.
- b. In the event the PCM has reasonable cause to believe the comment may contain confidential or otherwise privileged information, they shall comply with provisions of ER-4, Confidential Documents and Access Rule.
- c. If confirmation of receipt has not otherwise been provided to the commenter, the PCM will use the commenter’s provided contact information to attempt to provide confirmation of receipt in the same manner it was received unless specified otherwise in the comment.
- d. If the most appropriate means of managing a comment, based on the nature of the comment, the means by which it was delivered, or other reasonable criteria, is defined in a different RRC Rule, Policy, or Process, then the PCM shall forward the comment to the RRC person responsible for acceptance and further handling of the comment will comply with the requirements of that RRC Rule, Policy, or Process.
- e. If the comment received is not related to the RRC, the comment may be disregarded.

Potentially applicable RRC Rules, Policies, and Processes include:

- i. ER-1 Product Development Rule
- ii. ER-2 Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Program Rule

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- iii. ER-4 Confidential Documents and Access Rule
- iv. ER-11 Ethical Conduct Rule
- v. ER-12 Conduct Compliance Rule
- vi. P-01 Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- vii. P-07 Public Comment and Meeting Attendance Policy
- viii. PD-03 Technical Advisory Council Structure and Process

- f. As appropriate to the topic of the public comment, it will be documented in the record of RRC developments or proceedings.

5.4 Managing Informal Comments

The RRC recipient of an informal comment should acknowledge that the comments made will not be part of any further process and direct the commenter to provide formal public comment, if desired, to the RRC through appropriate channels defined in Section 5.1 of this Policy.

6.0 WAIVER

Portions of this policy may be waived if deemed necessary by a majority vote of the RRC Board.