

SCRG Quick Start Guide

A step-by-step guide to setting up, managing, and closing out a Safety Control Review Group (SCRG).

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Document History

Document history

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Introduction

The Safety Control Review Group (SCRG) process is well established within National Highways safety governance, as described in GG 104 Requirements for safety risk assessment. However, individuals asked to organise or chair an SCRG may not always know where to begin.

This guide provides practical support for establishing and running an SCRG, helping users move from identifying the need for an SCRG to holding their first meeting and managing safety decisions effectively. It is intended to complement existing National Highways safety governance arrangements and should be used alongside the SCRG Terms of Reference, Chairperson's Checklist and GG 104 requirements.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is intended for:

- Activity Managers
- Project Managers
- Senior Responsible Owners (SROs)
- SCRG Chairs
- Secretariat support personnel
- Anyone involved in establishing, supporting, or participating in an SCRG

It provides practical guidance on setting up, managing, and closing out SCRG activities in line with National Highways safety governance arrangements.



Step 1: Decide if you need an SCRG

Before establishing an SCRG, identify the GG 104 categorisation of the activity, feature(s), safety issue, or decision requiring assessment. This will determine the level of safety governance needed.

Ask yourself:

- What activity, change, feature, hazard, risk, or decision requires acceptance?
- Has a GG 104 categorisation been completed?
- Are there any Type B or Type C features requiring review?
- Does the activity introduce safety risks that require formal governance and acceptance?

Outcome

☒ Type A activity only

Continue through normal business area governance arrangements. An SCRG is not normally required, although an SCRG or elements of, may still be adopted as good practice where appropriate.

☒ Type B activity identified

Proceed to **Step 2** and establish an SCRG to review and accept the relevant safety work.

☒ Type C activity identified

Proceed to **Step 2** and establish an SCRG. The matter will also require subsequent escalation to the National (N)SCRG for review and acceptance and further governance considerations.

Key Point

A project does not need to be wholly categorised as Type B or Type C to require additional safety governance. Individual features, hazards, safety challenges, Departures from Standard, risks or decisions within a project may require SCRG review, with Type C activities requiring escalation to NSCRG.

If you are unsure whether an activity, feature or issue requires SCRG review, seek advice from the Safety Risk Requirements Team (SRRT)



Step 2: Define Ownership & Purpose

Once a Type B or Type C activity has been identified, an individual should take ownership of establishing the SCRG. This is typically the Activity Manager, Project Manager or Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), depending on local governance arrangements. The SCRG owner is responsible for assuring the group is established, appropriately resourced and able to fulfil its safety governance role.

Agree the Following

Why is the SCRG needed?

Clearly define the safety issue, risk, decision or deliverable requiring review and acceptance.

What decisions need to be made?

Identify the specific decisions the group will be asked to review and accept. SCRGs should only be convened when a decision requires acceptance.

What safety products can be reviewed?

Examples include:

- Safety Risk Assessment
- Safety Plan
- Safety Report
- Hazard Log
- Departures from Standard (DfS)
- Significant hazards and mitigation/treatment strategies
- Safety-related design proposals or changes

When are decisions required?

Consider project milestones, governance deadlines, and programme requirements to determine when meetings need to take place.

Success Criteria

By the end of this step, you should have:

- ✓ A nominated SCRG owner
- ✓ A clear scope for the SCRG
- ✓ Defined decisions requiring acceptance
- ✓ An understanding of the safety product(s) to be reviewed
- ✓ An initial view of when meetings will be required



Step 3: Build the Right Team

The effectiveness of an SCRG depends on having the right people involved. Membership should be based on the activity being reviewed and the safety risks associated with it. The group should collectively provide the knowledge, experience and authority needed to review and accept safety decisions.

Principal Attendees

Principal attendees collectively determine whether to accept the evidence presented to the SCRG. They should represent the business areas affected by the activity and have sufficient authority to contribute to decisions. Each principal attendee has the power to withhold acceptance where concerns remain.

Consider including representatives who:

- Own the activity or project.
- Will operate the asset or system.
- Will maintain the asset or system.
- Are affected by the decision.
- Understand the safety risks and operational impacts.
- Can represent key stakeholder interests affected by the activity.

Typical Principal Attendees

- Activity Owner / Project Manager
- Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)
- Operations Representative

- Operations Integration Manager
- Maintenance Representative
- Safety Risk Representative
- Health and Safety Representative
- Secretariat

Specialist Attendees

Specialist attendees provide additional expertise where required. Their involvement should be considered whenever specialist knowledge is needed to support a robust decision.

Examples include:

- SES Specialists
- Human Factors Specialists
- Technical Subject Matter Experts
- Digital Services Representatives
- Trade Union Representatives
- Independent Advisors
- External Specialists where additional independent challenge would be beneficial.

Questions to Ask

Before finalising membership, consider:

- Are all affected business areas represented?
- Do attendees have the necessary competence and experience?
- Do attendees have the authority to contribute to decisions?
- Is any specialist advice needed?
- Is independent challenge required?

Success Criteria

By the end of this step, you should have:

- ☒ A draft SCRG membership list
- ☒ Principal attendees identified
- ☒ Specialist attendees identified (where required)
- ☒ Confidence that the group has the right collective knowledge and experience to fulfil its role



Step 4: Consider Independence

Safety decisions should be subject to appropriate challenge and scrutiny. Independence helps assure that decisions are reviewed objectively and that potential risks or concerns are identified before acceptance. The need for independent review should always be considered when establishing an SCRG.

Ask Yourself

- Is anyone being asked to review or accept their own work?
- Is there sufficient challenge from outside the project or activity team?
- Do we need independent National Highways representation?
- Would external specialist advice improve decision-making?
- Are there any complex, novel, or high-risk issues that would benefit from independent input?

Types of Independent Input

Independence can be provided by individuals who are:

Independent from the Activity

Individuals who are not directly involved in developing or delivering the activity but are still part of National Highways.

Examples:

- SES specialists
- SES Technical Partner representatives
- Trade Union representatives

- Representatives from other business areas not directly involved in the activity.

Independent from the Activity and National Highways

External specialists may be appropriate where additional expertise or challenge is required.

Examples:

- Human Factors specialists
- Behavioural specialists
- Scientific researchers
- Independent operational safety advisors
- Other technical subject matter experts

Key Point

Not every SCRG will require external independent review. However, the need for independent challenge should always be considered and documented as part of setting up the SCRG.

Success Criteria

By the end of this step, you should have:

- ☒ **Considered whether independent challenge is required**
- ☒ **Identified any independent National Highways representatives needed**
- ☒ **Identified any external specialists required**
- ☒ **Confidence that attendees can provide objective review and challenge**



Step 5: Confirm Competence

Before the first SCRG meeting, confirm that attendees have the appropriate knowledge, experience, and authority to contribute to the topics being reviewed. The SCRG should collectively possess the competence needed to understand the safety risks, challenge the evidence presented and make informed decisions.

Check Individual Competence

Consider whether attendees:

- Have experience relevant to the activity being reviewed.
- Understand the safety risks associated with the activity.
- Have expertise in the discipline they are representing.
- Have the authority to contribute to decisions and recommendations.

Check Collective Competence

The SCRG does not require every attendee to be an expert in every topic. Instead, the group should collectively provide sufficient knowledge and experience across all relevant disciplines.

Ask yourself:

- Do we have the right mix of operational, technical and safety expertise?
- Are all affected business areas represented?
- Do we have appropriate knowledge of the issues being presented?
- Have any competence gaps been identified?

Use the GG 104 Self-Assessment Tool

The GG 104 Self-Assessment Tool should be used to help demonstrate competence and identify any gaps within the group. The outcome should be documented as part of the SCRG records.

If Competence Gaps Exist

Where gaps are identified:

- Invite additional Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).
- Obtain specialist advice in advance of the meeting.
- Request written input where attendance is not possible.
- Consider whether additional independent expertise is required.

Success Criteria

By the end of this step, you should have:

- ☒ Confidence that attendees are competent for their role
- ☒ Evidence of collective competence across the group
- ☒ Competence gaps identified and addressed
- ☒ A record of how competence has been demonstrated



Step 6: Prepare the SCRG Administration Package

Effective administration helps assure the SCRG can focus on reviewing and accepting safety work rather than chasing information during meetings. Consider appointing a Secretariat to support the Chair and manage the administrative arrangements.

Appoint a Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for coordinating SCRG activities and maintaining the records required for safety governance and audit purposes.

Prepare the SCRG Package

The Secretariat should support the Chair by:

- Arranging the meeting and issuing invitations
- Providing Terms of reference (TOR) for SCRG
- Confirming attendance from key members
- Preparing and issuing the agenda
- Gathering and circulating supporting papers
- Preparing the presentation deck where required
- Recording minutes and decisions
- Maintaining records for audit purposes
- Managing actions and tracking them through to closure

Before Issuing the Meeting Invite

Ensure you have:

- A clear purpose for the meeting.
- Defined decisions requiring acceptance.
- The appropriate attendees identified.
- Supporting documentation available.
- Sufficient time for attendees to review information before the meeting.

Key Point

SCRGs should only be convened when a decision requires review and acceptance. They are not intended to be general discussion forums.

Success Criteria

By the end of this step, you should have:

- ☒ A nominated Secretariat
- ☒ A scheduled SCRG meeting
- ☒ Agenda and papers prepared
- ☒ Attendees invited
- ☒ Arrangements in place for recording decisions and actions



Step 7: Prepare and Hold the First SCRG Meeting

The first SCRG meeting should function as a Stocktake Meeting, providing an opportunity to establish the group, confirm collective competence and assure members understand their role within the wider safety governance process. It sets the foundation for all future SCRG activities.

Note: Depending on the complexity of the activity, the first SCRG meeting may both establish the SCRG and review the relevant safety work. In these circumstances, the meeting may incorporate elements of both Step 7 and Step 8.

Purpose of the First Meeting

The first SCRG should provide confidence that:

- The right people are involved.
- The group has sufficient collective competence.
- Roles and responsibilities are understood.
- The scope of the SCRG is clear.
- Future governance activities are planned appropriately.
- Attendees understand how decisions will be reviewed and accepted.

Using the Outputs from Steps 1-6

The work completed in Steps 1-6 should form the basis of the first SCRG meeting. The purpose of this initial meeting is to review and confirm the governance arrangements, decisions, membership, independence, competence, and administrative preparations identified during the previous steps before progressing future acceptance activities.

Suggested Agenda

1. Introductions

Introduce attendees and their role within the SCRG.

2. Purpose of the SCRG

Explain why the SCRG has been established and what it is expected to achieve.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Confirm the responsibilities of the Chair, Principal Attendees, Specialist Attendees and Secretariat.

4. Competence Review

Confirm that the group has the necessary collective competence and discuss any identified gaps.

5. Membership Review

Confirm the attendance requirements and whether any additional representation is needed.

6. Quorum Requirements

Agree the minimum attendance required for future meetings, ensuring the necessary competence, authority and representation are available to review and accept decisions.

7. Activity Overview

Provide a high-level overview of the activity, project, change, or issue being reviewed.

8. Safety Challenges and Risks

Highlight key safety challenges, hazards, assumptions, and areas likely to require future SCRG review.

9. Proposed Safety Governance Route

Explain how safety decisions will be managed, reviewed, and accepted throughout the activity lifecycle.

10. Forward Plan

Identify anticipated SCRG topics, key milestones, and future meeting dates.

Key Question

Is the SCRG satisfied that it has the right people, with the right competence, reviewing the right issues?

If the answer is "no", address any gaps before proceeding with future acceptance activities.

Success Criteria

By the end of the first SCRG meeting, you should have:

- ☒ Membership confirmed
- ☒ Collective competence demonstrated
- ☒ Quorum arrangements agreed
- ☒ SCRG remit understood by attendees
- ☒ A forward programme of safety governance activities
- ☒ Agreement on when future SCRGs will be required



Step 8: Conduct the SCRG Review

Once the SCRG has been established and attendees have received the relevant information, the group can review the item requiring acceptance.

During the Meeting

The Chair should:

- Confirm the meeting is quorate.
- Confirm attendees have the appropriate competence for the topics being discussed.
- Confirm any independence requirements have been met.
- Ensure all attendees have an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.
- Facilitate challenge and review of the evidence presented.
- Summarise the discussion and confirm the outcome with the group.

For Each Item

The SCRG should:

- Review the evidence presented.
- Consider the safety risks, assumptions, and proposed mitigations/treatments.
- Challenge information where clarification is required.
- Agree whether the evidence demonstrates that safety risks have been appropriately considered and managed.
- Record any actions, conditions, or concerns.

Possible Outcomes

- ☒ Accepted
- ☒ Accepted subject to actions or conditions
- ☒ Not accepted and requires further work

All decisions, actions, conditions, and acceptance outcomes should be documented within the meeting records and tracked through to closure where applicable.

Success Criteria

By the end of the meeting, you should have:

- ☒ **A clear decision for each item reviewed**
- ☒ **Actions assigned to named owners where required**
- ☒ **Any concerns or conditions documented**
- ☒ **Agreement on next steps**



Step 9: Close Out Actions and Maintain Records

Following the SCRG, ensure that decisions, actions, and outcomes are recorded and communicated to the relevant stakeholders. The Chair and Secretariat should work together to maintain appropriate records and monitor actions through to completion.

After the Meeting

- Record all the decisions, actions, conditions, and acceptance outcomes arising from the SCRG.
- Issue draft minutes within ten working days.
- Assign actions and confirm action owners.
- Monitor actions until they are complete.
- Update relevant safety products where required.
- Retain records for governance and audit purposes.

Key Question

Have all SCRG decisions, conditions and actions been captured and progressed?

Success Criteria

- ☒ Decisions recorded
- ☒ Minutes issued
- ☒ Actions assigned
- ☒ Safety products updated
- ☒ Governance records maintained
- ☒ Actions closed out
- ☒ Accepted outcomes progressed through the relevant governance process

Remember

Right Issue → Right People → Right Challenge → Right Decision

A successful SCRG is not about holding meetings; it is about assuring that safety-related decisions are reviewed by the right people, with the appropriate competence and independence, supported by the right evidence.

By bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise, the SCRG process also helps identify potential unintended consequences and wider impacts before decisions are implemented.

By following the steps in this guide, you can establish an SCRG that supports effective safety governance and provides confidence that safety risks have been appropriately considered and managed.

Annex A: References

- [Safety Risk Requirements Team SharePoint page](#)
- [GG104 Requirements for Safety Risk Assessment](#)
- [Management Arrangement of Safety Risk for National Highways Activities](#)
- [A Step-by-Step Guide to using GG104 Requirements for Safety Risk Assessment](#)
- [Safety Risk Assessment Guidance](#)
- [SCRG Chairpersons Checklist](#)
- [GG104 self-assessment tool](#)
- [GG 104 Requirements for safety risk assessment Frequently asked questions](#)
- [SCRG Terms of Reference](#)
- [SCRG Minutes template](#)
- [SCRG slide deck template](#)

Annex B: SCRG Process Roadmap

The flowchart below (Page 19) provides a visual summary of the key stages involved in establishing and running a Safety Control Review Group (SCRG). It should be used alongside the detailed guidance provided within this document.

