

Road Safety Audit

March 2022

This newsletter provides road safety auditors, designers and other road safety professionals an update on current road safety audit related issues in addition to the review of Road Safety Audit (RSA) reports.

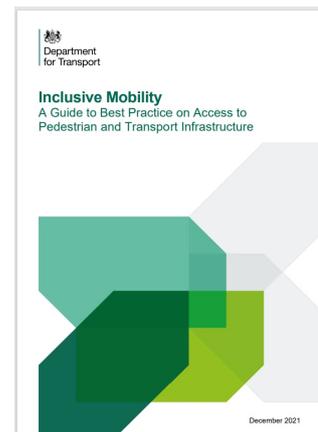
This March edition comprises the review of RSA reports submitted to the National Highways inbox at roadsafetyaudit@highwaysengland.co.uk between October and December 2021 (inclusive).

Inclusive Mobility – A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure: 2021

In December 2021 the DfT released '*Inclusive Mobility – A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure: 2021*', a guidance document that describes features that need to be considered to provide an inclusive environment. Although the main purpose of the guidance is to provide good access for disabled people, inclusive design benefits all users, including those who have non-visible disabilities.

This guidance is for use by anyone designing and installing public realm schemes and improvements, including national and local authorities and their consultants, highways practitioners, and urban designers. It applies to both new build schemes and upgrades to existing layouts.

For more information, visit: [Inclusive Mobility. A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1024222/inclusive-mobility-a-guide-to-best-practice-on-access-to-pedestrian-and-transport-infrastructure-2021.pdf)



This newsletter includes:

- Areas for development
- Examples of Good Practice
- Summary of RSAs undertaken during 2021 and submitted to the National Highways inbox
- CPD opportunities

DID YOU KNOW?

The CIHT Safety Audit Guidelines have recently been updated. For more information visit: [CIHT Safety Audit Guidelines](#)

Scope

This review focuses on a sample of the total number of reports uploaded to the National Highways road safety audit database during the period October to December 2021. The objectives of the review are to encourage discussion on good practice and areas that need further development.

This review also looks back over the whole of 2021 and includes a comparison with RSAs undertaken during 2019 and 2020.

During the period October to December 2021 **a total of 74 RSAs were submitted**, all of which were carried out in accordance with GG 119.

The types of schemes covered by the submitted RSAs are shown in Figure below.

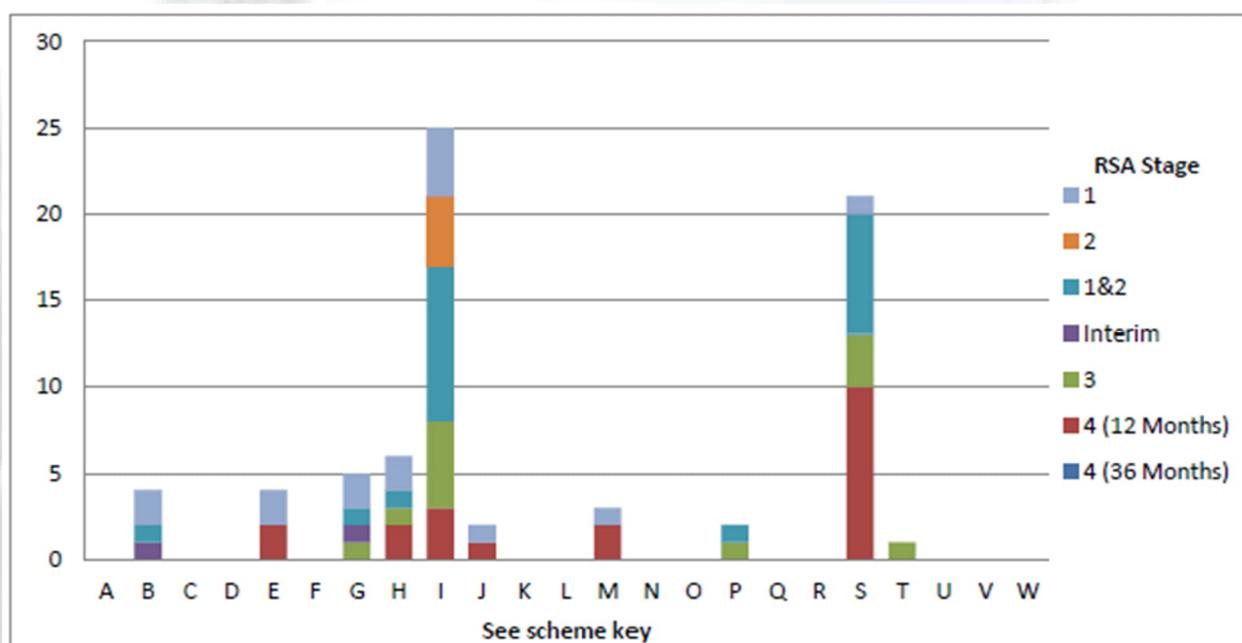


Figure 1 - RSAs by scheme type submitted during this 3-month period (October – December 2021)

Scheme Key			
A	All-Lanes-Running / Smart Motorways	M	WCHR Path / Way / Route
B	Bridge	N	Public Realm / Urban Regeneration
C	Bus Lane / Guided Bus	O	Public Transport Interchange / Hub
D	Conversion from Single to Dual Carriageway	P	Road / Access Closure or Feature / Facility Removal
E	Drainage	Q	Shared-Use (WCHRs & Traffic)
F	Enforcement Infrastructure / Cameras	R	Shared-Use (WCHRs Only)
G	Junction Improvement	S	Signs / Markings
H	Link Improvement	T	Temporary Traffic Management
I	Maintenance Infrastructure	U	Tram or LRT Route / Facility
J	Maintenance Access	V	Tunnel
K	Traffic Signals (New)	W	Widening
L	WCHR Crossing		

RSAs submitted by National Highways area

Figure below illustrates all RSAs submitted to the SR-DT inbox between 1 October 2021 and 31 December 2021 by each National Highways area.

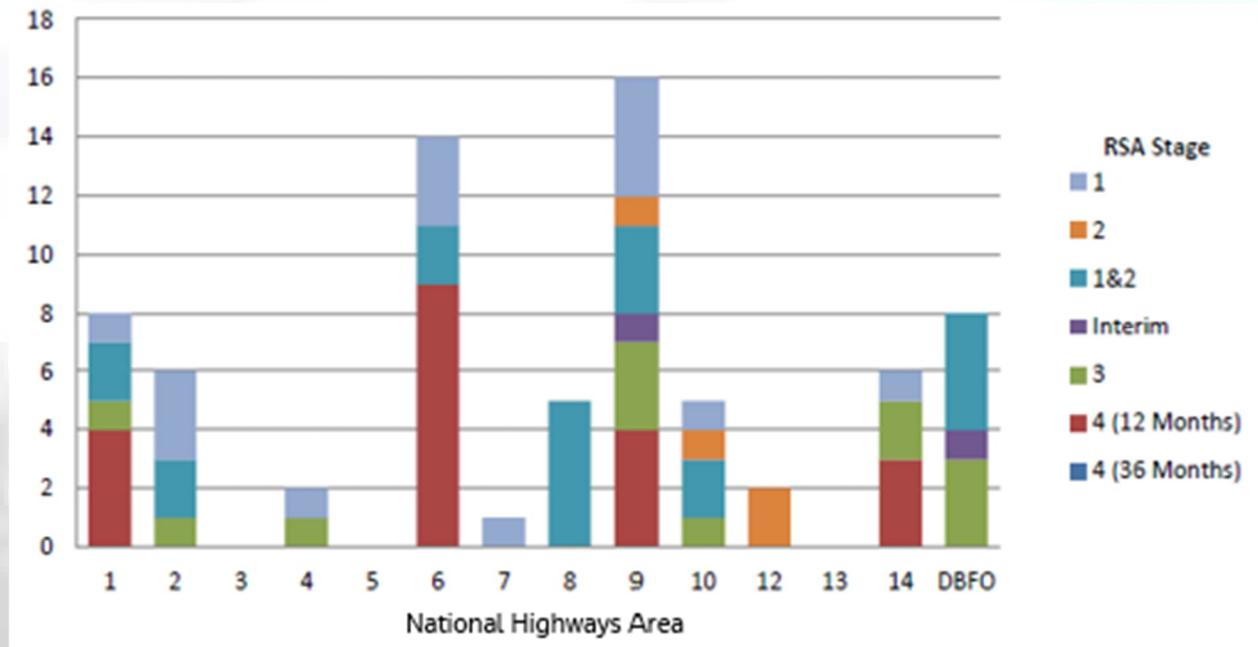


Figure 2 - RSAs submitted between 1 October 2021 and 31 December 2021 by National Highways Operational Area

Thirty (40%) of the RSAs submitted during this period were from two areas (6 and 9). Of those, 13 were Stage 4 RSAs.

The sample

Of the 74 reports submitted, 27 sample reports were selected for review. The list below details the numbers of each stage of RSA forming the study sample together with totals submitted for the 3-month period. The 2 interim RSAs were both stage 3 audits. None of the stage 4 RSA reports were included in the sample as they were all zero problem reports.

RSA Stage	No. included in sample
Interim	2 of 2 submitted
Stage 1	9 of 15 submitted
Stage 2	2 of 4 submitted
Combined Stage 1 and 2	10 of 20 submitted
Stage 3	4 of 12 submitted
Stage 4	0 of 20 submitted

Note: One of the RSAs submitted to the database did not specify the stage of the audit

Good practice and areas for improvement

Based on the RSAs reviewed in this sample, this section aims to identify areas of good practice and aspects that could be changed to align better with GG 119, or that could be improved so the RSA reports follow best practice.

Good practice

- Inclusion of photographs and drawing extracts to highlight a problem
- Reference to the relevant drawing number included in the problem to help identify the location
- Increasing use of scheme models to aid the RSA team

Areas for development

- Provision of clear scheme objectives. **See GG 119 Table C.3**
- Ensuring that the details of who approved and issued the RSA brief is included in the audit report rather than using the statement, '*the RSA team have formally accepted the brief.*' **See GG 119 clause 4.3**
- Avoiding vague site visit details such as '*early afternoon*' or '*flows as expected.*' **See GG 119 clause 5.3**
- Ensuring that the RSA team attend the site visit together. **See GG 119 clause 5.40**
- Avoiding recommendations that just request further information. Where insufficient information is provided, this should be requested from the overseeing organisation. **See GG 119 clause 4.5**
- Ensuring that one member of the audit team holds a Certificate of Competency in road safety audit. **See GG 119 clause 3.9**

Summary of RSAs undertaken in 2021 and comparison to previous years

This section provides a summary of all the RSA reports submitted to the inbox which were carried out in 2021. The date the RSA was undertaken is taken from the date of the site visit. Where no site visit was undertaken or recorded (because of the Covid19 pandemic restrictions or for any other reason) the RSA team signature date has been used. The date that RSAs were submitted to the inbox during the 12-month period has not been considered as this would include late submissions of historic RSAs which could have been undertaken as early as 2018.

The National Highways RSA database indicates that 367 RSAs undertaken in 2021 were submitted to the inbox, although it is recognised that this may not be all the RSAs carried out during this period. Figure 3 illustrates these RSAs by stage along with the comparative data for 2020 and 2019. For clarity and brevity, within the following paragraphs of this section, 'undertaken' should be interpreted as meaning those RSAs undertaken within the year specified and also submitted to the RSA inbox.

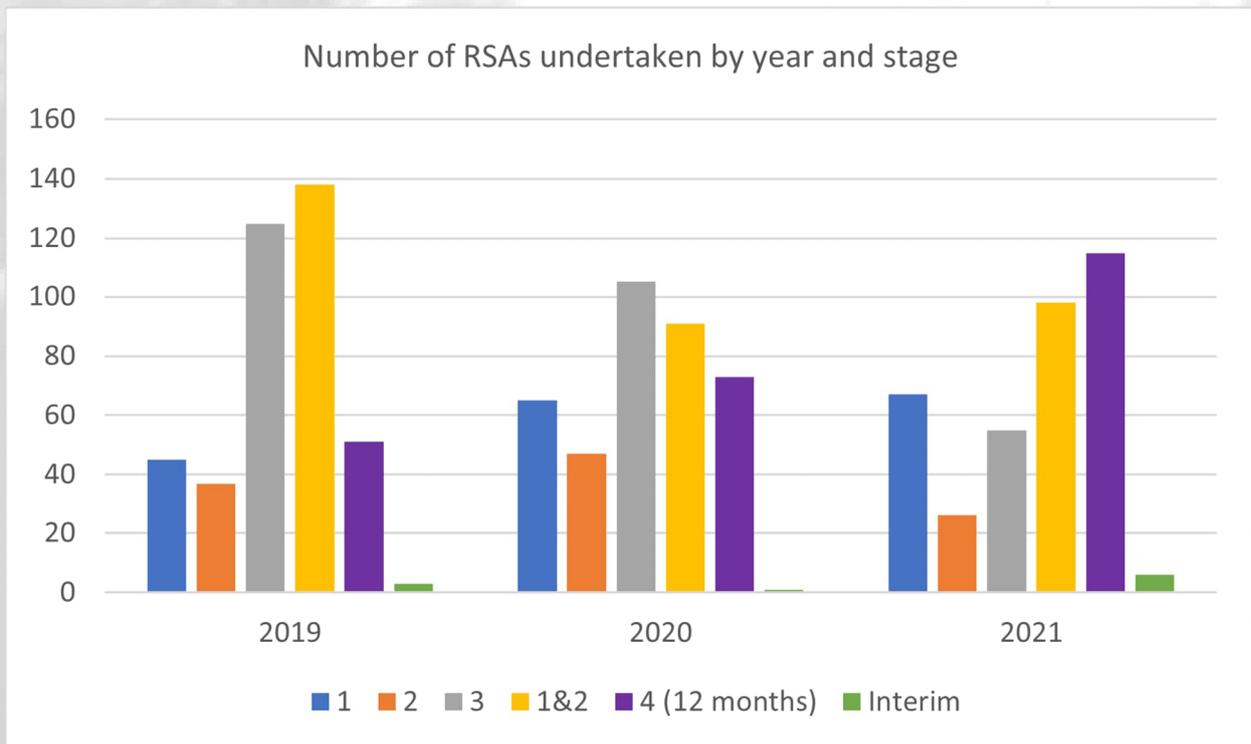


Figure 3 - RSAs undertaken by year and stage

Over the three year period 2019 to 2021, the total number of RSAs submitted have shown a gradual decrease from 399 in 2019, 382 in 2020 and 367 in 2021. The most notable changes over the three year period are the reduction in Stage 3 RSAs and the increase in Stage 4 RSAs.

Stage 1 RSAs

45 stage 1 RSAs were undertaken between January and December 2019 in comparison to 65 undertaken in 2020 and 67 undertaken in 2021. This shows that the number of stage 1 RSAs increased in 2020 and remained at a similar level in 2021.

Stage 2 RSAs

The total number of stage 2 RSAs undertaken in 2019 was 37 in comparison to 47 undertaken in 2020 and 26 undertaken in 2021. This shows an increase in 2020 and then a significant decrease in 2021.

Combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs

138 combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs were undertaken between January and December 2019 in comparison to 91 undertaken in 2020 and 98 undertaken in 2021. This indicates a decrease in 2020 and 2021, suggesting that combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs may be being applied more appropriately in accordance with the wording in GG 119.

To get an accurate measure of how appropriately combined stage 1 and stage 2 RSAs are being applied would require further analysis on the proportion of SRN schemes for which the design goes straight to detailed design.

KEY REMINDER:

GG 119 Clause 5.17.2 Where preliminary design is not undertaken, a stage 1 RSA may be combined with a stage 2 RSA at the detailed design stage.

Stage 3 RSAs

A total of 125 stage 3 RSAs were undertaken between January and December 2019 in comparison to 105 undertaken in 2020 and 55 undertaken in 2021. This steady decrease could be a result of the Covid 19 pandemic and a general slowing of scheme delivery although this has not been evidenced.

Stage 4 RSAs

A total of 41 stage 4 RSAs were undertaken in 2019, 73 in 2020 and 115 in 2021. Although this is unlikely to represent all stage 4 RSAs being undertaken, it does indicate an increase over the three year period. Further analysis of the stage 4 RSA reports would be required to better understand the reasons for this increase.

Effects of Covid19

Figure 4 shows the total number of RSAs at each stage, undertaken during each quarter of 2019, 2020 and 2021.

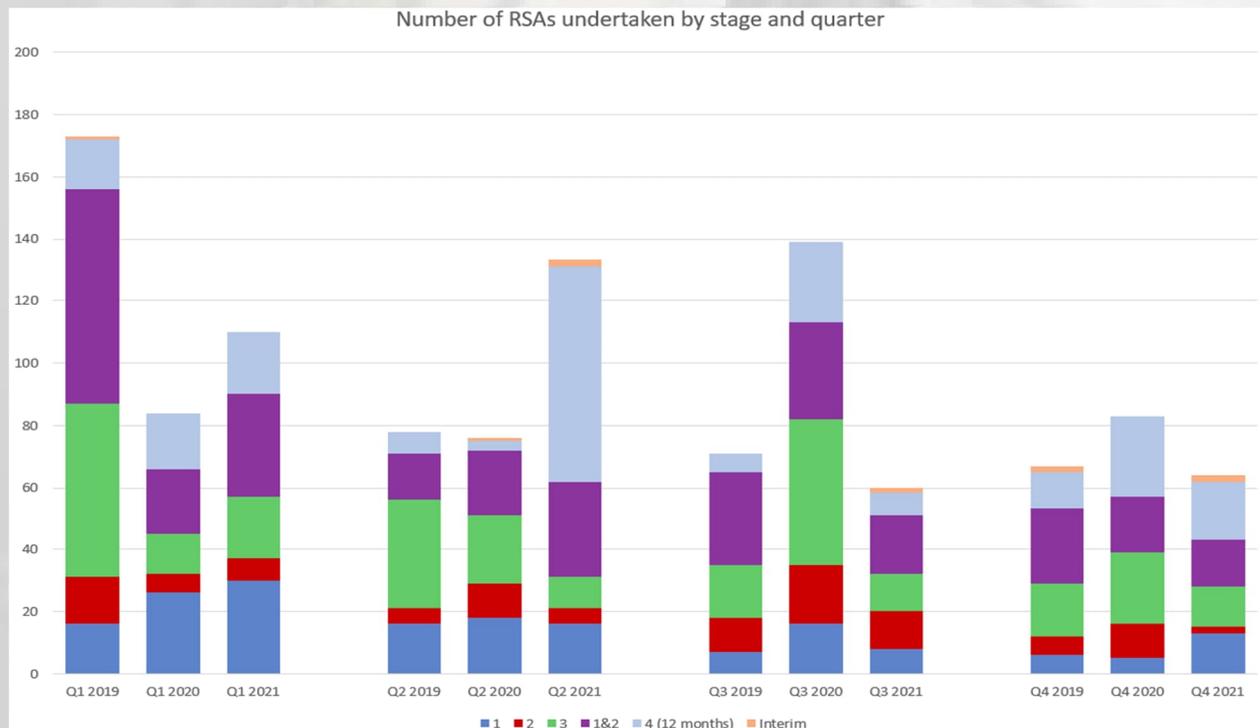


Figure 4 - RSAs undertaken in 2019, 2020 and 2021 by stage and quarter

The pandemic may have had some effect on the number of each stage of RSA undertaken, specifically during 2020 and 2021. The table below sets out the timings of National Highways' relaxations on site visit requirements for all stages of RSAs except stage 3s.

Quarter potentially affected	Date	Site Visit Relaxation
Q2 2020	27/03/2020	Introduced
	01/07/2020	Lifted
Q1 2021	06/01/2021	Re-introduced
	25/03/2021	Lifted

Outside of lockdowns, other government restrictions and National Highways site visit relaxations, the pandemic may have impacted on the number of RSAs undertaken due to staff availability, furloughs, sickness and other resourcing issues. This could be since the outbreak in Q1 of 2020 and, to some degree, until the present time.

However, there has been a distinct downturn in the general number of stage 1 to stage 3 RSAs undertaken since Q1 of 2019. The only pronounced peak in stage 1 to stage 3 RSAs since then was in Q3 of 2020 which does coincide with some relaxations in Covid19 restrictions.

The opposite is the case for stage 4 RSAs which have seen an increase since 2019. This is despite only 3 stage 4 audits taking place in Q2 of 2020 compared with 18 and 26 in Q1 and Q3 of the same year. It is not clear whether the Covid19 restrictions had any impact on the number of stage 4 RSAs undertaken between 2019 and 2021. Further analysis of stage 4 RSA issues will feature within a future newsletter.

Given that many workers on the SRN were exempt from some government restrictions on travelling and working, it cannot be certain that lockdowns themselves had any effect on RSA numbers although the personal health and individual auditor's perceptions of risk may well have had an impact on RSA numbers.

Continuing professional development

KEY REMINDER:

Examples of organisations offering online resources suitable for CPD include:

The Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT)

<https://www.ciht.org.uk/>

The Society of Road Safety Auditors (SoRSA) <https://www.ciht.org.uk/sorsa/>

The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) <https://etsc.eu/>

The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) and Road Safety GB <https://www.pacts.org.uk/>