

Road safety audit newsletter

March 2023

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

This March edition comprises a summary of a sample of RSAs undertaken in 2023 submitted to the National Highways inbox between October and December 2023 (inclusive).

The inbox address is roadsafetyaudit@nationalhighways.co.uk

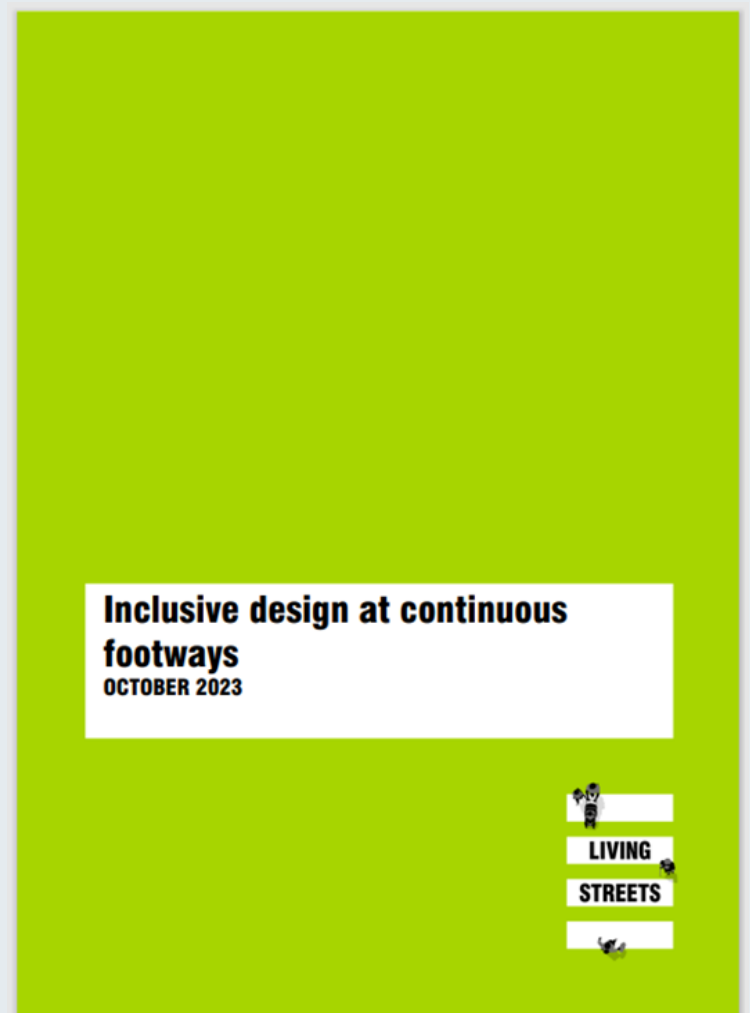
New guidance

This report is part of the Living Streets project “Inclusive design at bus stops and continuous footways”. It was prompted by questions around whether continuous footways make streets more or less inclusive, and whether particular design features make a difference.

Some of the key conclusions were:

- That there is a very high level of confusion over what is and what is not a continuous footway, how they should be designed, and what their use aims to achieve, and also
- The use of these designs can create problems not just for some disabled people, but for a wider group.

The report also considers key design features and limitations, and the use of tactile paving where there are continuous footways.



Scope

This review includes a summary of all the RSA reports submitted to the National Highways RSA inbox during the period 1 October to 31 December 2023 and then focuses in more detail on a sample of these reports. The objective of the review is to encourage discussion on good practice and areas that need further development.

This review also looks back over the whole of 2023 and includes a comparison with RSAs undertaken during 2022 and 2021.

RSAs by National Highways area

Figure 1 below illustrates all 62 RSAs submitted to the RSA inbox between October and December 2023 by National Highways area.

44% of the RSAs submitted this quarter were from Area 6 (20%) or Area 9 (24%).

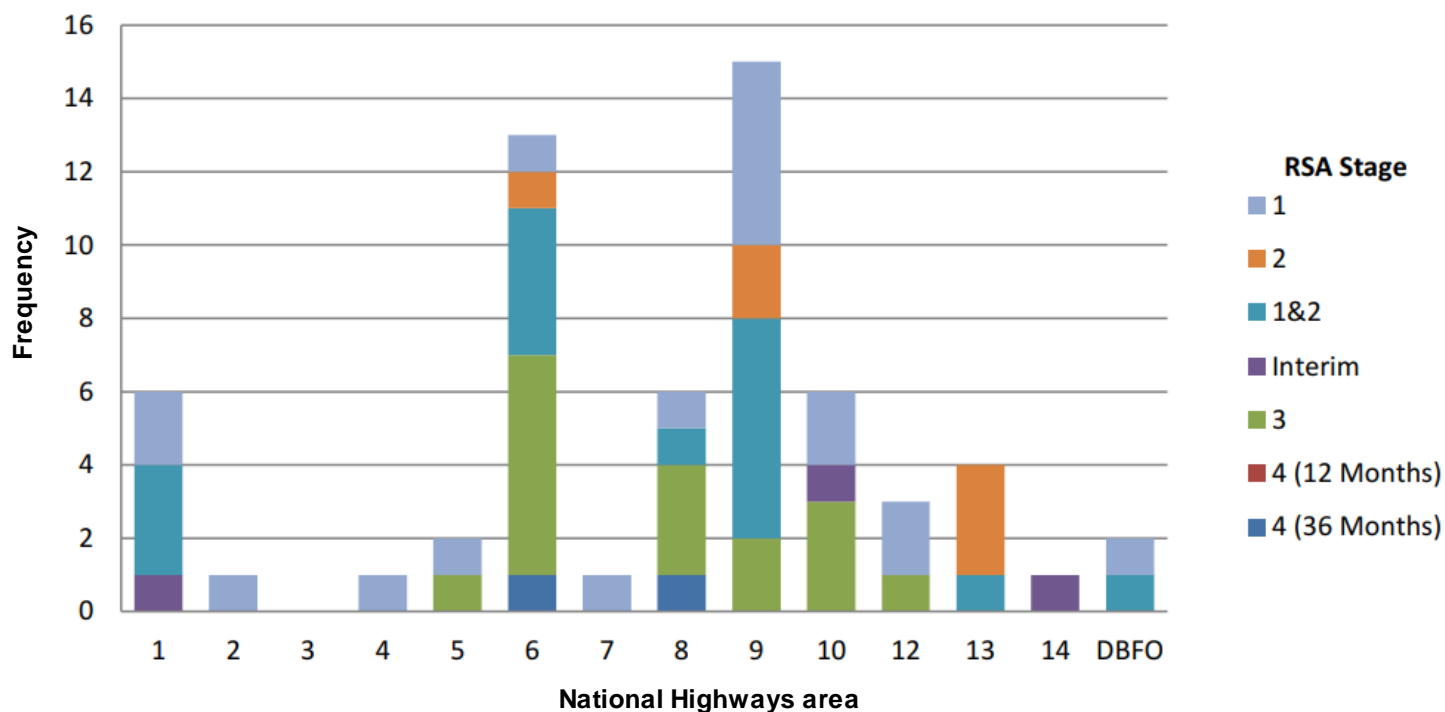


Figure 1 – Number of RSAs by National Highways operational area (October - December 2023)

Of the 62 RSAs submitted during this period 82% were made up of stage 1 (30%), combined stage 1&2 (26%) or stage 3 RSAs (26%).

RSA stage	Number
1	19
2	6
Combined 1 & 2	16
3	16
4	2
Interim	3

RSAs by stage and scheme type

Figure 2 below illustrates all 62 RSAs submitted to the RSA inbox during the three-month period between October and December 2023 by stage and scheme type. 40% were maintenance infrastructure schemes.

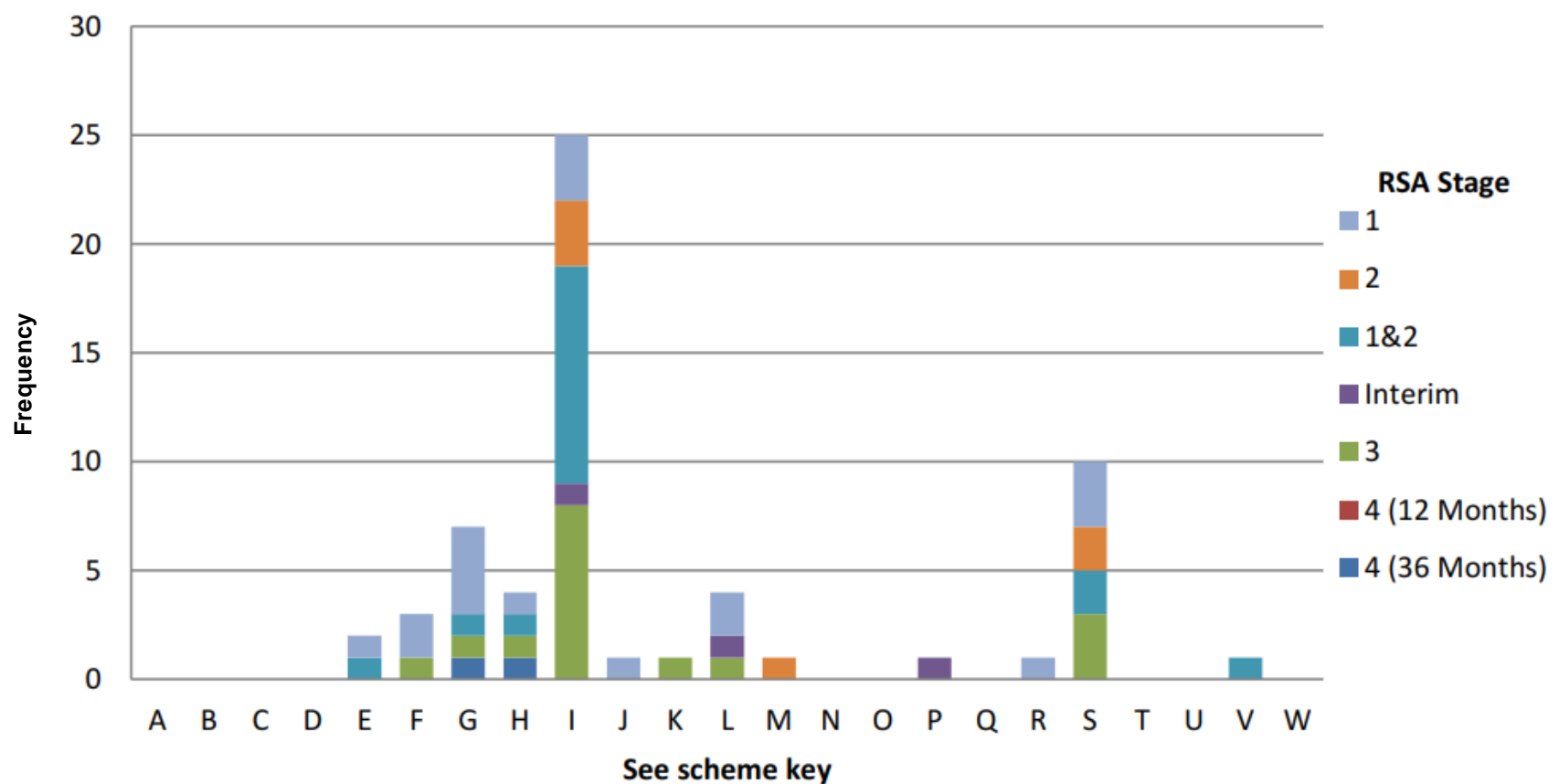


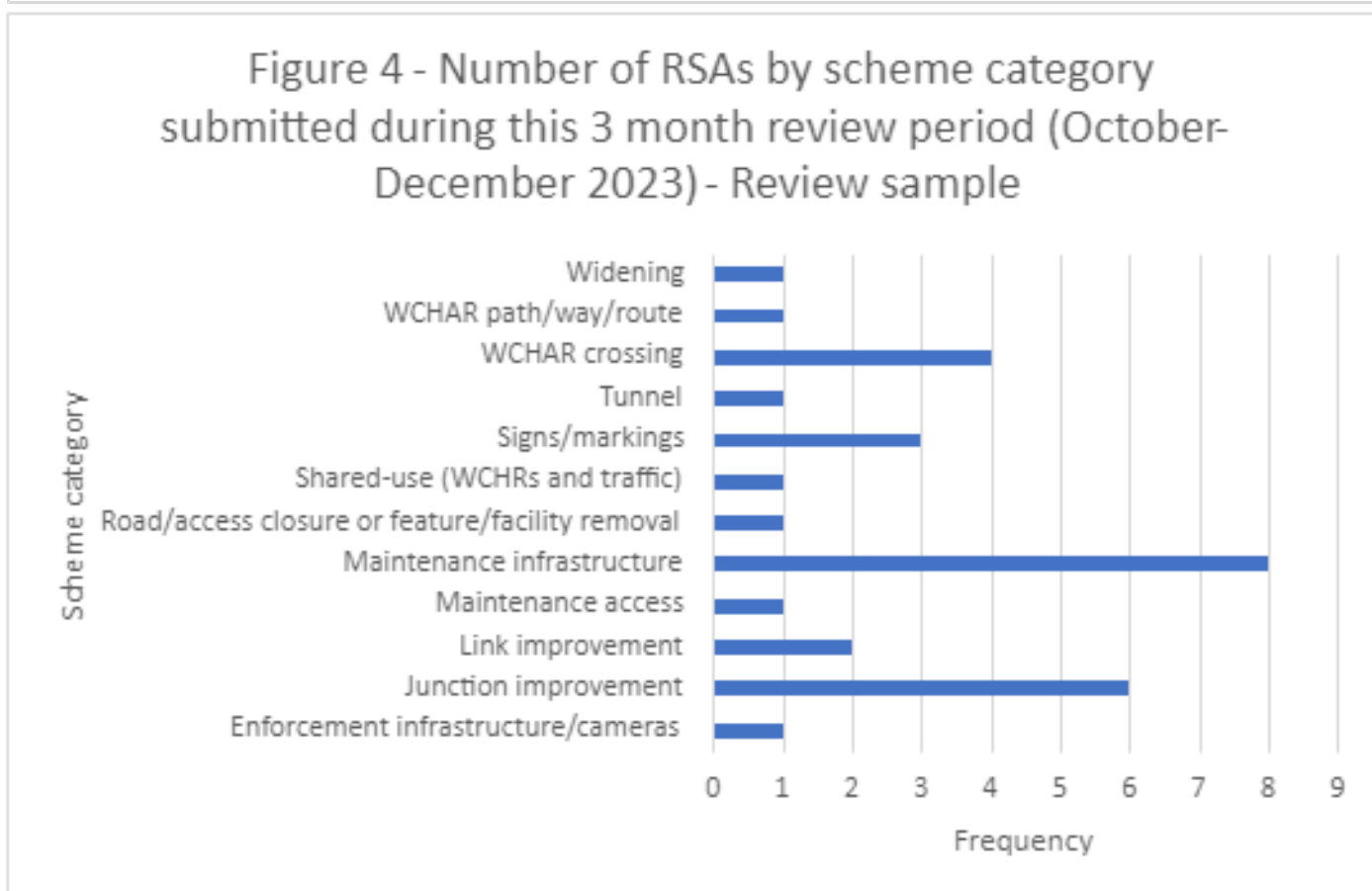
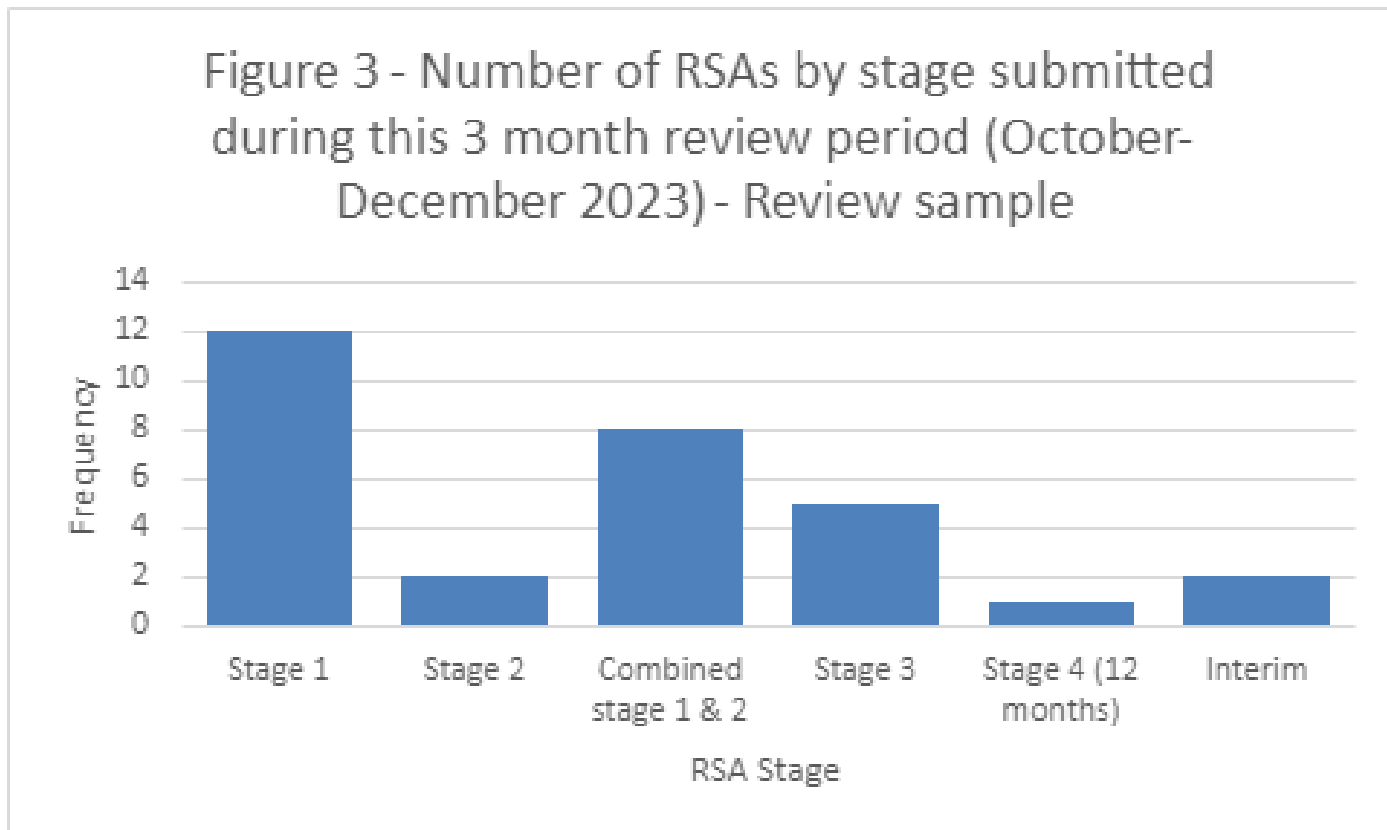
Figure 2 – Number of RSAs by stage and scheme type (October to December 2023)

Scheme key	
A	All lane running/smart motorway
B	Bridge
C	Bus lane/guided bus
D	Conversion single to dual carriageway
E	Drainage
F	Enforcement infrastructure/cameras
G	Junction improvement
H	Link improvement
I	Maintenance infrastructure
J	Maintenance access
K	Traffic signals (new)
L	WCH crossing
M	WCH path/way/route
N	Public realm,/urban regeneration
O	Public transport interchange/hub
P	Road/access closure or feature/facility removal
Q	Shared use (WCH and traffic)
R	Shared use (WCH only)
S	Signs/markings
T	Temporary traffic management
U	Tram or LRT route/facility
V	Tunnel
W	Widening

Review sample

This review focuses on a sample of RSA reports uploaded to the National Highways road safety audit database during the period October to December 2023. During this period, a sample of 30 RSAs submitted to the RSA inbox have been reviewed, all of which stated they had been carried out in accordance with GG 119.

The stage of the RSAs is shown in Figure 3 and the types of scheme in Figure 4 below.



Good practice

Based on the 30 RSAs reviewed in this sample, this section identifies areas of good practice.

Use of photographs / other supporting information

Some RSAs, particularly those with multiple problems, made good use of photographs, drawing extracts and other information which was useful to support the problem text.

Details of the site visit

The date, time and conditions of the site visit were covered comprehensively in most of the reports.

**See GG 119
clause 5.13**

Areas for development

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

Proportionate and viable recommendations

One recommendation in the sample was not deemed to be 'proportionate and viable.' The RSA report should provide recommendations which are proportionate and viable, based on the RSA stage, to eliminate or mitigate the RSA problem. It is important that recommendations do not read as instructions.

**See GG 119
clause 5.10**

Combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs

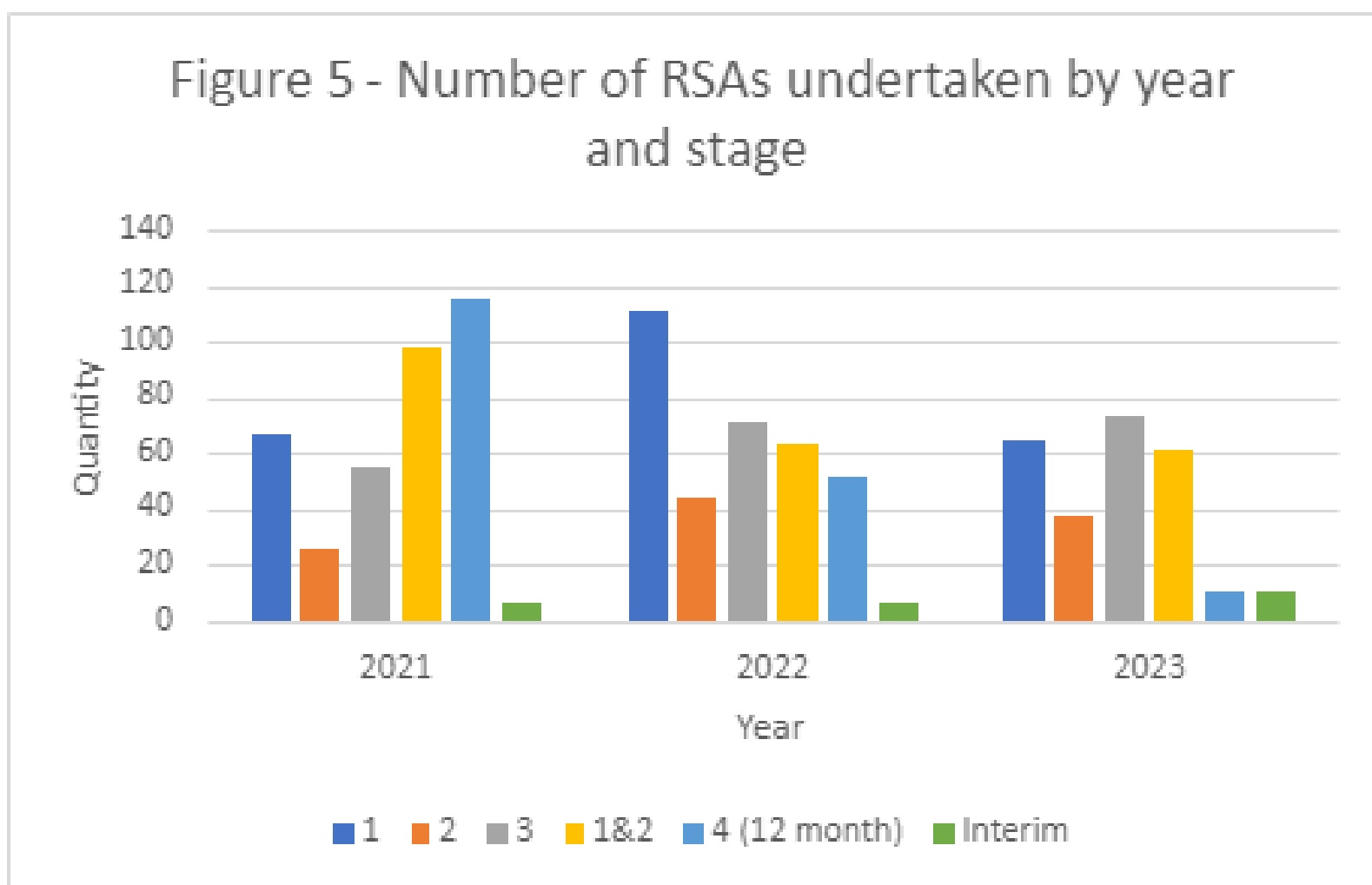
In most cases the report did not state why the RSA stages were being combined. One combined stage 1 & 2 RSA report stated that preliminary design had been done but the Project Sponsor requested a combined audit.

**See GG 119
clause
5.17.2**

Summary of RSAs undertaken in 2023 and comparison to previous years

This section provides a summary of all the RSA reports submitted to the inbox which were carried out in 2023. The date the RSA was undertaken is taken from the date of the site visit. Where no site visit was undertaken or recorded 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.

The National Highways RSA database indicates that 260 RSAs undertaken in 2023 were submitted to the inbox, although it is recognised that this may not be all the RSAs carried out during this period. Figure 5 illustrates these RSAs by stage along with the comparative data for 2022 and 2021. 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.



Summary of RSAs undertaken in 2023 and comparison to previous years continued...

Over the three-year period 2021 to 2023, the total number of RSAs submitted has continued to show a gradual decrease from 367 in 2021 to 348 in 2022 and 260 in 2023.

The most notable changes over the three-year period are the reduction in stage 4 (12 month) RSAs. 31% of the total no. of RSAs submitted to the inbox in 2021 were stage 4 (12 month) RSAs, compared with 14% in 2022 and 4% in 2023.

Stage 1 RSAs

Sixty-five stage 1 RSAs were undertaken between January and December 2023 in comparison to 111 undertaken in 2022 and 67 in 2021. This shows that the number of stage 1 RSAs has significantly reduced since last year, although has remained largely the same as the number of stage 1 RSAs undertaken in 2021. The reason for the spike in stage 1 RSAs being undertaken last year is unclear.

Stage 2 RSAs

The total number of stage 2 RSAs undertaken in 2023 was 38 in comparison to 44 undertaken in 2022 and 26 in 2021. The number of stage 2 RSAs has therefore remained largely the same as last year.

Combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs

Sixty-two combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs were undertaken between January and December 2023 in comparison to 64 undertaken in 2022 and 98 in 2021. This indicates that the number of combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs has therefore remained largely the same as last year when there was a decrease of 35% compared to 2021. This suggests that combined stage 1 and 2 RSAs may be being applied more appropriately in accordance with the wording in GG 119.

Stage 3 RSAs

A total of 73 stage 3 RSAs were undertaken between January and December 2023 in comparison to 71 undertaken in 2022 and 55 undertaken in 2021.

Summary of RSAs undertaken in 2023 and comparison to previous years continued...

Stage 4 RSAs

A total of 11 stage 4 (12 month) RSAs were undertaken between January and December 2023 in comparison to 52 undertaken in 2022 and 115 undertaken in 2021. This indicates a significant decrease this year compared with last year and a consistent decrease over the 3-year period between 2021 and 2023.