

NEWSLETTER

March 2019

Editorial.....	1
ERA is ready for June '19: Thierry Breyne	2
One-Stop Shop: first release	2
Positive vote on TSIs and registers in RISC.....	3
Spotlight on the customer: EPF on the PRM TSI revision.....	3
News from ERA	4

Editorial



Dear Reader,

Safe – connected – affordable. Do you remember these words? They have guided the SERA Conferences which ERA and the European Commission organised in 2017 to discuss with all railway stakeholders the upcoming changes which the Fourth Railway Package (4RP) will bring. In less than 12 weeks from now, on 16th June 2019, the implementation of this 4RP legislation, giving ERA and other stakeholders new roles and responsibilities, should be

completed. Please allow me to give you some background.

After ages of conflicts and two devastating wars between European countries in the twentieth century, the vision of Europe is to ensure peace and prosperity for all EU citizens, and to make Europe a good place to live. This requires free movement of people and goods between all European countries, the highest safety standards and universal access to services. Applied to railways, that vision is to be realised as SERA, a Single European Railway Area.

It is the vision of the European Parliament that European railways should be safe, connected and affordable. Harmonised processes and high safety standards should allow railways, currently the most sustainable mode of (international) transport, to become more attractive for passengers and freight. That's why in May 2016 the EU Parliament decided a number of new legislative texts, called the Fourth Railway Package.

The Fourth Railway Package legislation consists of a so-called 'Market Pillar' and a 'Technical Pillar'. The tasks of ERA are described in the Technical Pillar. It gives the Agency a leading role in ensuring the implementation of a harmonised European legislation. ERA will become the only institution worldwide mandated to authorise vehicles that operate across borders in Europe, to issue single safety certificates which are valid in

multiple European states, and to ensure an interoperable European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS). Bulgaria, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia will adopt the new regime in June 2019. Switzerland will adopt the new regime on a case-by-case basis from June 2019. The transposition into national law and implementation of the new system is a big effort. This is why other countries chose to transpose the new legislation by June 2020.

We are confident that in the mid-term the new processes established by implementing the Fourth Railway Package will enhance technical integration and simplify international authorisation. EU-wide harmonised rules make acquiring an international vehicle authorisation or safety certificate more reliable and transparent and as a consequence, reduce costs and project risks for applicants (railway companies). This can help to make railways gain a competitive advantage and to make them more affordable for their customers.

ERA is now ready for its new tasks, thanks to the excellent collaboration with all railway actors: the sector organisations, the representatives of industry and customers, the National Safety Authorities (NSAs) in each member state, the European Commission and the dedicated work of its staff.

Josef Doppelbauer, Executive Director of ERA

ERA is ready for 16th June 2019

Interview with Thierry Breyne, Head of the new Planning and Approval Delivery Unit (PAD) at ERA



How did ERA prepare for its new role, and what is the current status?

We identified three main areas of actions to prepare for the upcoming new mandate and tasks: setting up an efficient organisation, ensuring the necessary competent resources and acquiring the maximum possible know-how.

ERA has adopted a matrix-approach, allowing staff with the necessary competencies to be assigned (temporarily) to projects when required, regardless of their position in the organisation. The new PAD Unit was created and is in charge of processing and delivering the vehicle authorisation (VA), the single safety certificates (SSC) or the ERTMS trackside approvals from 16th June 2019 onwards. This unit is supported by all other units, providing resources and know-how. By June 2019, we will have checked and validated all internal procedures,

such as interfaces with Finance, HR and Communications.

We have carefully screened our resources and recruited additional experts who are operational immediately based on their competences and experience. In addition, we are training experts from the National Safety Authorities (NSAs) together with our staff to form, by June 2020, a Pool of Resources of more than 200 skilled people to be able to manage each kind of application in each European language requested. The hands-on exercises during the trainings gave the participants the experience to work in multinational teams and established good relationships for future collaboration.

Applicants, ERA staff and NSAs are collaborating on more than 30 learning cases, comprising applications which are already under assessment by NSAs and which will be finalised by ERA after 16th June 2019. We observe excellent teamwork: the ERA participants are getting a better understanding on specific national processes, the NSA way of working, and the challenges of the work of an authorising entity. Teams find solutions for gaps and discrepancies and there is a strong will to 'construct something together', which is very promising.

ERA is certainly well prepared. The results of the Peer Review exercise organised by ERA's Management

Board end of 2018 confirm this. The legal texts and implementing acts, as well as detailed application guides for the new VA, SSC and ERTMS trackside approval processes are available on the [ERA website](#).

Can you estimate the number of applications ERA will receive from June onwards?

Beginning of January we have asked all NSAs of the Member States transposing in 2019 and sector organisations to inform us on the applications to be managed by ERA from 16th June 2019 onwards. Based on this information we expect in the first year around 30-40 VA applications and around 5-10 SSC applications. We would like to remind all potential applicants to contact us as soon as possible in order to consolidate and secure the list of projects for which the Agency will take decisions after June 16th 2019.

That is a big challenge. How do you cope with that?

There will of course be issues in the first few months following the application of the new processes. I'm confident that we'll find solutions together, based on the excellent cooperation we had with all stakeholders in the past, and the feedback we receive about the friendly, constructive and open atmosphere between all parties during the learning cases and trainings.

One-Stop Shop IT tool: first release

The production environment of the OSS is now available. This IT tool is the single entry point for all applications for VA authorisations, SSC or ERTMS trackside approval at ERA. While it aims to make the application and approval process more efficient, there will still be a personal dialogue between the applicants and the Agency. Future

applicants can now prepare their documentation in the One-Stop Shop (OSS) IT-tool, which has been online since the 16th February 2019. They will be able to submit their application file to ERA from 16th June 2019 onwards. Applicants can request access to the OSS here: <https://oss.era.europa.eu/register.html>. A guidance is available on the

[ERA website](#). In case of difficulties ERA service desk via servicedesk@era.europa.eu provides assistance. Trainings on the use of the OSS will be conducted in Valenciennes on a nearly weekly basis until mid-2019. For more information or to register for upcoming OSS trainings, contact oss.training@era.europa.eu.

Positive RISC vote on TSIs and registers

Last remaining piece of legislation to be aligned with the Directive 2016/797 (4RP)

All Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs), except TSI Operation, have now been revised. They specify the mandatory requirements for all types of vehicle authorisation and the design characteristics for the future modification of already authorised vehicles. The Noise-TSI in particular now includes the retrofitting of existing wagons with composite brake blocks to reduce the noise. This is now mandatory when

operating in the, so-called, “quieter routes”.

In addition, the updates of the Railway infrastructure Register (RINF) and the European Register of Authorised Types of Vehicles (ERATV) received a positive vote in the EU Railway and Interoperability Safety Committee (RISC). From June 2019 onwards ERATV application will contain a new list of parameters, enabling the

registration of the vehicle type authorisations issued by the new One-Stop Shop IT Tool. This new list also includes parameters for technical compatibility between Vehicle and the network(s) of area of use. Also, the RINF application will include additional parameters needed for the vehicle/route compatibility check. It will allow for the identification of a route and the export of its corresponding characteristics.

Spotlight on the Customer: EPF on the current PRM TSI revision

Interview with Kurt Hultgren, European Passenger Federation (EPF)



The revisions of the Technical Specifications for Interoperability for Persons with Disabilities and with Reduced Mobility (PRM TSI) received a positive opinion in the European Commission’s Rail Interoperability and Safety Committee. ERA has started the development of an IT system containing data on how railway systems are equipped to support persons with disabilities or reduced mobility and how this information is transmitted to the passengers. We talked to Kurt Hultgren from the European Passenger Federation who is actively contributing to the TSI PRM revision-working party.

How important is the share of passengers with reduced mobility in railways? Approximately 40% of the EU population is permanently or temporarily disabled due to problems associated with walking, sight, hearing or orientation. Discriminating against such vulnerable persons is not acceptable, and Passengers’ Rights are of utmost importance to them.

The EU legislation aims at enhancing competition to improve the quality of the service for the customers. Is this competition favourable to persons with reduced mobility? If accessibility for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM) can be improved, it often improves service quality for all other passengers as well. Offering accessible entrances, lifts and ramps, level entrances into vehicles, visible signage, good public announcement systems and good orientation is essential. In addition, information about the trip and the available infrastructure and services is necessary in the planning stage, but also in stations and on the trains. This should be mandatory for all railway companies – it is a prerequisite for fair competition. I believe that companies that invest in accessible infrastructure for PRM,

and in providing the information to their passengers, can benefit from a competitive advantage.

Can you describe the current situation and how a revised PRM TSI could improve this? Having accessible stations is not enough. Passengers should be able to easily retrieve all information about their journey, in particular regarding accessibility and services. In some countries this information is already available upon booking the ticket, but remains difficult to provide for international journeys.

We are happy that the PRM TSI revision starts with mapping the current situation in the Member States (MS) to recognise good work already done. It should be a mandatory rule for all MS to have a designated Station Manager for each station, providing the same type of service and information in each MS, facilitating the planning of international journeys. Buying tickets should become easier. Internet and new technologies could help, however not all passengers are prepared to use smart phones or other technologies everywhere, and not all persons are fully digitalised. Therefore an information system

based on printed posters and good physical signage must be in place.

Why is coordinated information between Member States necessary?

Easy access to (international) rail travel is a prerequisite for the free movement of persons and goods in the EU. From an ecological perspective, it is essential to more intensively use rail transport, which

is currently the most sustainable transport mode. Hence passengers should be able to easily retrieve all information about accessibility and services in each European country.

News from ERA

ERA organises CCRCC Conference on ERTMS 15-17 October 2019 in Valenciennes:

after having reached system maturity with stable specifications, ERTMS roll out has been intensified under the European Commission's action plan. With the implementation of the Fourth Railway Package in full force, digitalisation and the advent of big data, the rail sector is facing new challenges, which will be addressed at the conference. In order to get participants more involved and to foster dialogue among the expert community, workshops will be held.

Successful EUMedRail workshops on Safety Culture and SMS in Egypt and Serbia:

on 22-23 January ERA co-organised with the Ministry of Transport and Egyptian National Railways a seminar on rail accidents investigations and safety culture in Cairo. From 12- 14 February ERA, together with the National Safety Authority of Serbia, held a workshop on Safety Management Systems and Safety Culture in Belgrade. More than 70 participants from the Southern Mediterranean area, Balkan region and EU representatives attended the event.

Space for Innovation in Rail conference 19-20 March in Vienna:

jointly organised by ERA, the

Shift2rail Joint Undertaking, the European GNSS Agency and the Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology of Austria brought together the main stakeholders, industry, and user communities in railways. They exchanged views on a vision and roadmap of space technologies for the future of railways in Europe and discussed their role in innovation and digitalisation, with a special focus on progress and implementation of Satellite Navigation for Rail.

Expert EUMedRail Seminar on the role of the National Safety Authorities in The Hague on 20-21 March:

organised on 20 and 21 March 2019 by ERA in co-operation with the Ministry of Transport of the Netherlands and ILT (Environment and Transport Inspectorate). Invited experts from Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Palestine were able to benefit from European railway expertise. They were shown how NSA supervision which is aimed at ensuring railway safety performance is in no way a barrier for railway market opening nor for interoperability. Main topics included issuing, renewal, amendment and revocation of safety certificates and vehicle authorisation, licensing of train

drivers, supervision tasks and reporting and statistics.

Further implementing regulations:

the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) [2019/250](#) was published on 13 February 2019. The new text is part of the 4RP legal framework for delivering vehicle authorisations. It stipulates templates for declarations and certificates for railway interoperability constituents and subsystems. They are designed on the model of declaration of conformity to an authorised railway vehicle type and on the European verification procedures for subsystems.

Common Occurrence Reporting: in order to facilitate the sharing of safety related information quicker and in more detail on a wider range of occurrences/incidents, the EU Agency for Railways is working towards the preparation of a new Common Occurrence Reporting system. Although this initiative has not been welcomed by all Member States, we believe that the recent tragic accident in Denmark shows the need for such a system.

Save the date: 57th ETCR Training Course on EU Transport Policy and Railway Affairs from 1-12 July in Bruges. [More information.](#)

Making the railway system work better for society.

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