

# NEWSLETTER

December 2018

Editorial.....1  
 Route Compatibility .....2  
 Interview: Frank Andreesen on Multimodality .....3  
 Gender Balance and Sector Modernisation .....4  
 News from EUMedRail.....5  
 Dates and Announcements .....5

## Editorial



*Dear Reader,*

Already since 2015, the Agency has been preparing the implementation of the technical pillar of the Fourth Railway Package. Together with the National Safety Authorities and the representatives of the European rail sector, we have been doing our best to communicate the fundamental change that is coming to the European rail sector with this legal package. Completing the technical integration of the European rail market, ERA will become a European authority responsible for issuing vehicle authorisation, safety certificates, and ERTMS trackside approval from June 2019 onwards.

### *The Agency is Prepared*

To get ready for its new mission, the Agency has undergone some [structural changes](#) and hired new staff with the required expertise, while at the same time developing the One-Stop-Shop (OSS), the IT Tool facilitating the new processes. With OSS, ERA is phasing in the digital age for vehicle authorisation and safety certification in Europe. Concluding cooperation agreements with the NSAs to define the parameters of collaboration will complement the preparation for the new era.

I am glad to report that while the European idea may be put into question in other segments of the political spectrum, the spirit of European collaboration is alive in the rail sector – in order for the Fourth Railway Package to be a success, we do rely on the support of our fellow institutions in the Member States, as well as that of the companies and organisations from the European rail sector, and they have been instrumental in helping us to meet the challenges that come with change.

### *Dealing with Transition Period*

One major challenge is, of course, the transition period between June 2019 and June 2020, during which Member States will transpose the technical pillar of the Fourth

Railway Package. We will deal with these problems pro-actively, and solve them in the spirit of transparency and good collaboration.

### *At the Dawn of a new Era*

The Fourth Railway Package is the most significant piece of legislation in the history of railways – we are at the dawn of a new era for railways, and there are many reasons to look optimistic into the future of European railways. European market integration, standardisation, common and simplified operational procedures, and single processes will take the cost out of the sector and make it more competitive. All big players in Europe are now dedicated to give ERTMS, and to making the network truly interoperable. By streamlining technologies, and bundling resources for innovation, the digital revolution will be an important enabler for European railways. Thanks to its safety record, low environmental footprint, and multimodal integration, rail must become the most relevant transport mode in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders for the good and fruitful collaboration in 2018, and look forward to continuing our good work in 2019! ◀

## Getting New Trains on Track

How to perform Route Compatibility Checks under the Fourth Railway Package

Vehicle route compatibility check (RCC) is not new to the rail sector. However, roles and responsibilities will change with the entry-into-force of the Fourth Railway Package in mid-2019. At InnoTrans 2018, ERA got together with Europorte, SNCF Réseau and the French rail safety authority EPSF to demonstrate the



intricacies of the new processes through the example of a freight train running between Belgium and France.

### *Route Compatibility Check is not Vehicle Authorisation*

The first thing to remember about route compatibility check under the new regime is that it is a procedure uncoupled from the process of vehicle authorisation. In fact, it is the responsibility of the railway undertaking to perform the check using a vehicle that already received an authorisation for placing into market (APM) and the information gathered electronically through the register of rail infrastructure (RINF). In the case presented at InnoTrans, a freight train transporting phosphoric acid is set to run from Puurs (Belgium) to Lerouville (France). Europorte as operator is using its safety management system (SMS) in order to ensure that the vehicles are properly authorised and registered, compatible for use on the intended route, and to ensure proper integration in the composition of the train. The infrastructure managers – Infrabel (Belgium) and SNCF Réseau

(France) in this case – provide the route characteristics.

### *Safety Management System: Key to the Process*

Throughout the journey of the train both railway undertaking and infrastructure managers are jointly responsible for the safe operation of the train.

ERA and the National Safety Authorities (NSAs) ensure that the safety management system of each market participant is conforming with EU regulation prior to the operation ([more info](#)). For the operation of a freight train between Belgium and France, it is the role of the respective National Safety Authorities to supervise the safety management of the rail operator and infrastructure managers.

The vehicle route compatibility check is an evaluation of the vehicle data against the infrastructure data. For the most part of the EU railway network, this should be a lean and straightforward process – it is performed only once per type of vehicle and, in a harmonised network, a lot of the items will already be covered at authorisation stage of the vehicle. Some items, however, may need dedicated



competences – e.g. for checking the compatibility with rail infrastructure on bridges or the allowed acceleration speed at railway crossings.

### *Operator Responsible for Check – Infrastructure Manager to Support*

The infrastructure manager adopts a supporting role by providing data about the infrastructure used. Ideally, the data is already available in the European rail infrastructure register RINF (mandatory as of 2022); however, should this not be the case yet, the infrastructure manager is legally bound to provide

the same information directly to the rail operator free of charge. The route compatibility check may be sub-contracted to third parties such as the infrastructure manager or a rail manufacturer – the legal responsibility for the check remains with the operator though and the contractual arrangements would be subject to auditing through the National Safety Authorities.

For the freight route proposed between Puurs and Lerouville, around 40 items had to be checked using the technical file of the vehicle and the information submitted into the RINF. The more ‘usual’ parameters such as track gauge, minimum curve radius, train detection system, wheel set gauge and a possible prevention of use of a magnetic brake were a matter of simple comparison of data. Compatibility of vehicle and infrastructure and bridges, and acceleration speeds at level crossings deserved a closer look.

A final step before entering into operation is the process of train composition which is different from the route compatibility check. This is



performed once and only has to be repeated if the composition of a train is changed. The key parameters of the train composition are length of train, load carrying capacity and braking capacity. As the Belgian-French freight train is transporting dangerous goods, the path has also to be checked accordingly. Once the check was completed and the train composed, the French National Safety Authority EPSF comes into play to supervise the effectiveness of the safety management system of

Europorte and SNCF Réseau applied to the check.

The scope of safety management systems of railway operators and infrastructure managers in Europe will in the future have to include

vehicle route compatibility checks and train composition. Once this is done, these checks should be, under the new European regime, a straightforward process.

For more information on this issue, please contact

[oliver.piron@era.europa.eu](mailto:oliver.piron@era.europa.eu) ◀

## Interview: Why Multimodal Transport is the Way Forward

Frank Andreesen, Head of Logistics Advocacy at German chemical multinational Covestro, explains how integrated transport can help to reduce emissions while boosting business in Europe



**Q: Why is the European chemical industry interested in multimodal or combined transport in Europe?**

Making better use of Multimodal or Combined Transport is essential to maintain an efficient and effective European freight transport network. It also allows de-congesting and de-carbonising our transport chains, combating driver shortage and climate change. And yet, while we wish to make better use multimodal transport in Europe, rail freight consistently fails to deliver the desired level of performance, particularly when it comes to reliability. This represents a serious threat to the security of supply chains, from producer through to end consumers, whether that is the case for the automotive industry, the construction industry or the electronics industry, or our own production plants, keeping them supplied or lifting finished goods on time, so to be able to maintain large-scale continuous production processes.

Our share of combined transport amounts to approximately 20% of total European land transport movements, and yet more than 50% of the delays are caused by disruptions and delays in railway transport. Unless the rail freight sector is getting on with resolving its many well-known structural problems, implementing its improvement plans, we are not going to see any further shift to rail.

**What can be done to overcome the problems in European rail freight?**

To achieve the desired and required shift from road to rail, rail needs to become as easy to use as road transportation. And most importantly, as flexible and

reliable. The rail freight sector must urgently resolve its interoperability issues, shifting its focus from managing multiple national networks to further building and developing our Single European Railway Area.

The in my opinion most obvious quick win, is the establishment of a European train driver operating language, based on a set of predefined operational phrases, supported by a tablet device. This device could and should then also be used to provide the train driver with information about route properties and operational instructions. Which could and should also serve as the basis for the introduction of a European train driver licence.

We also need to improve infrastructure planning with emphasis on a holistic European plans, rather than what we perceive to be a patchwork of multiple national infrastructure master plans, glued together by the rail freight corridors. To increase reliability of rail freight, there is a need for more capacity, in particular also sufficient back-up routes, overcoming also the ongoing conflicts between passenger and freight trains.

**How do you see digitalised rail freight transport in 10 years in an intermodal environment?**

I would hope that with increasing digitalisation, operational train management systems will eventually be fully integrated along our international rail freight corridors. In particular also when it comes to managing exceptions, directing delayed freight trains on most suitable path to their final destination.

Finally, multiple operating systems will be connected seamlessly along international rail transport chains, directing freight trains more efficiently and providing shippers and consignees with proactive exception alerts and reliable ETA information in case of delays.

**What market developments do you expect for European logistics in the next 5 years?**

Unless we are making huge steps forward in starting to fix some of the well-known structural problems in our European logistics networks, we will see a further erosion in the reliability of our logistics chains. Shippers will be in fierce competition for scarce logistics capacities. Large scale production plants may face production outages, or will have to slow down their production lines, so not to run out of vital raw materials. Or carry more inventory, so to be able to compensate delays encountered in their inbound supply chains.

Unless we are successful in shifting more goods from road to rail, we are likely to see a collapse of traffic in all densely populated areas. We are already seeing this on the ring roads of major cities and traffic junctions, with far too much cargo leaving or reaching a region by road, or worse, trucks just passing through nodes, on their international journeys.

What I do hope though, is that we will finally be seeing a better integration of international rail freight. The pressure on all actors to improve is already huge. We cannot afford the performance of our logistics networks to deteriorate further. It's time to act, now! ◀

## Women in Rail: A Modernisation Project for the Sector

ERA Chairwomen on why the Fourth Railway Package represents the perfect opportunity to attract new and female talent to the rail sector

InnoTrans 2018 was yet another impressive display of the innovative capacity of the global railway sector, and yet a lot of work has to be done to improve the gender balance in a traditionally male dominated sector. That said, there is an increasing number of initiatives and networks that are set to challenge this status quo – real progress seems to be in the offing.

One of the initiatives that promote change is the German-based [Women in Mobility](#) network, which rightly identified empowerment as central theme for InnoTrans – with great success, as more than 500 participants of the Women in Mobility luncheon can testify to. Using social media, the network shows the achievements of women leaders in railways – encouraging young women to follow in their footsteps.

In order to retain a competitive edge in a globalised world, the rail sector indeed will have to demonstrate to young talented women why they should come and work for us. The EU-based initiative Women in Transport – EU Platform for Change, recently conducted a study amongst women from ages 16 to 25, finding that for

them, essential job features are fair pay, fair working conditions, work-life balance, pride and please, job security, and social interaction.



Modern European railways will have to make sure they can provide these working conditions for young women, because only with diverse teams comes innovation, and only an innovative rail system will stand the test of global competition. The Fourth Railway Package stand for modern railways in a common, diverse,

innovative European market with new job opportunities. We should clearly communicate to young women that we wish them to participate in shaping the future of railways in Europe.

If you are interested to get involved, do look out for further activities for women in transport in 2019; at the International Transport Forum in Leipzig (May 2019), and a Women in Transport Conference in late 2019. And do not miss the chance to sign up for the [Declaration on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the Transport Sector](#) and become a member of the [Women in Transport – Platform for Change \(EC\)](#) ◀

## News from the EUMedRail Project

*The EUMedRail project seeks expertise for Euromed beneficiaries*

The EUMedRail Project is funded by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement

(DG NEAR) of the European Commission and has a budget of 2 Million Euros for the period 2017-2020. The project supports the implementation of the Regional Transport Action Plan actions 2014-

2020 related to rail transport and enables technical assistance to the Euro-Mediterranean countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

The EUMedRail project is looking for independent experts with relevant expertise to provide technical assistance to the Euromed beneficiaries. For the support of this project, the EU Agency for Railways has launched a call for independent experts. This call for independent experts aims to build a database of experts that will promote European railway regulation in the EUMedRail beneficiaries.

In particular, experts will disseminate European best practices, regulation and standards to the beneficiaries of the project and support railway regulatory reforms in the field of ERTMS, safety and interoperability.

Should you wish to take part in the Call for Independent experts and contribute to the railway safety and interoperability in North Africa and Middle East Region, please visit the [procurement area of the Agency website](#).

### *EUMedRail pursues the debate on safety and interoperability*

The EUMedRail project held its first annual conference on 9-10 October 2018 in Brussels, gathering experts from transport authorities, rail operators and European institutions to discuss the state of play of the “Action 12 - Safety and Interoperability” of the Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean Region (RTAP) 2014-2020.

The Chair of the Transport and Tourism (TRAN) Committee of the European Parliament, Karima Delli, opened the 2-days conference by delivering with a speech outlining advantages, benefits and challenges of railway transport before the EUMedRail delegations.

The first day of the conference engaged in a debate on railway safety and interoperability. EUMedRail beneficiaries informed

about the progress made regarding the establishment of National Safety Authority (NSA), National Investigation Body for railways (NIB) and Safety Management System (SMS).

The Community of European Railways hosted the second day of the seminar. European experts outlined the vision of the rail industry included in “Challenge 2050” strategy, and highlighted the role of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) to support railway developments and safe operations. The day finished by a technical visit to the Multitel Test Lab where the beneficiaries participated in a technical debriefing on ERTMS.

Prior to the Annual Conference, on 8 October, the EUMedRail delegations took part in the first Meeting of the Union for the Mediterranean Working Group on Land Transport. ◀

#### REGISTER NOW

23 January 2019

1st Transport Cybersecurity Conference, Lisbon

[Programme and Registration](#)

#### REGISTER NOW

1-12 July 2019

European Training Centre for Railways (ETCR), Bruges

[Programme and Registration](#)

#### SEASON'S GREETINGS

End of 2018

Our best wishes for 2019!

[ERA's Season's Greetings](#)

#### SAVE THE DATE

18-19 March 2019

Space for Innovation in Rail, Vienna

[Programme and Registration](#)

#### SAVE THE DATE

15-17 October 2019

#ERTMS2019  
CCRCC

More info to follow soon

Making the railway system work better for society.

© 2018, European Union Agency for Railways. All rights reserved.

#### European Union Agency for Railways

120 rue Marc Lefrancq  
FR-59307 Valenciennes Cedex  
Tel. +33 (0) 327 09 65 00

Editor-in-chief: Max Obenaus

e-mail: [communication@era.europa.eu](mailto:communication@era.europa.eu)

Photo credits: ERA

