

ERA ISSUES A SINGLE SAFETY CERTIFICATE FOR THALYS

VALENCIENNES, France, 22nd November 2019

The European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) issued a Single Safety Certificate for THALYS today.

Josef Doppelbauer, Executive Director of ERA, signed today the single safety certificate for THALYS (THI Factory). This certificate is valid for a period of five years and covers an area of operation currently limited to France. THALYS continues to operate in Belgium under their safety certificates Part A and Part B until their validity expires.

Patrice Lambert, Safety Director at THALYS, summarises: "This certificate demonstrates THALYS' commitment to the safety of its operations. By following ERA's processes, we have demonstrated our commitment to transparency and we are delighted that these efforts have been recognised by the European authorities. Engaging with ERA before the submission of the application and during the course of the assessment gave us a better understanding of the procedural stages and of what was expected from THALYS. This considerably facilitated the processing of the application. The One-Stop Shop supports the applicant in preparing its application file in a structured way, which should make updating and follow up during the supervision phase more transparent for the railway undertaking".

ERA's Executive Director, Josef Doppelbauer, welcomes the positive experiences during the certification process with THALYS: "I am satisfied about the good collaboration of ERA staff with the French national safety authority (EPSF)", he said, "but we recognise that there is more work to do to streamline the process for the benefit of all those involved."

About the EU Agency for Railways

The European Union Agency for Railways was established in Valenciennes (offices) and Lille (meeting facilities) in 2004. Its approx. 200 staff represent more than 22 European Member States and speak multiple languages. ERA has been providing EU Member States and the European Commission with technical assistance in the development and implementation of the Single European Railway Area. This comprises enhancing technical interoperability and harmonising rules, promoting simplified access for customers, developing a common approach to safety and safety culture, advising on telematics applications and ERTMS (European Traffic Management System), monitoring National Safety Authorities and Notified Bodies and facilitating the exchange of information between the railway actors in Europe. Since 16th June 2019 the EU Agency for Railways is mandated to issue single safety certificates and vehicle (type) authorisations valid in multiple European countries and to ensure an interoperable European Rail Traffic Management System. The purpose of these activities is expressed by the slogan "Making the railway system work better for society."

About Thalys

For over 20 years, Thalys has been committed to bringing cultures and economy of the four European countries in its network (France, Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands) closer together. In 2018, Thalys reached the important milestone of more than 7.5 million annual passengers. At high speed, it takes only 1h22 to reach Brussels from Paris aboard the red trains, 3h14 to travel to Cologne and 3h17 to travel to Amsterdam. A pioneer of on-board WiFi since 2008, Thalys has distinguished itself since the beginning by offering an exceptional service: multilingual welcome, ergonomic comfort and quality catering. Since December 2017, Thalys offers a choice between three service levels. Prices in the "Standard" category start from 29€ (France to Belgium) and 35€ (to Germany and to the Netherlands). "Comfort" offers a first class environment, while "Premium" offers passengers the full Thalys service experience, including at-seat meal service. With the green Izy trains, Thalys also offers a low-cost alternative between Paris and Brussels, with a slightly longer travel time of 2h15, and a 30% cheaper rate. Thalys has been a full-function railway company since 2015, with SNCF and SNCB as shareholders.

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