

**OPINION ERA/OPI/2012-04/INT**  
**OF THE EUROPEAN RAILWAY AGENCY**  
OF 28 June 2012

FOR

Ms Sian PROUT – DG MOVE B2

---

REGARDING

Question and clarification from NB-Rail on assessment of the interoperability constituent "buffer" in the HS  
RST TSI (QC-RST-012)

---

## 1. General Context

1. In a note to JC Pichant dated 30 May 2012 and referenced D (2012)643.673, Ms Sian PROUT (DG-MOVE B2) has requested the Agency to issue a technical opinion regarding the question and clarification by NB Rail.

This note is attached in Annex 1.

2. The technical scope of this technical opinion to the QC-012-RST relates to the clause 4.2.2.2.1 “End couplers and coupling arrangements to rescue trains” and 4.2.2.2.2 “buffing and draw gear components” of the HS RST TSI (Commission Decision 2008/232/EC).

## 2. Legal Background

1. Article 28(5) of Directive 2008/57/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of June 2008 on the interoperability of the rail system within the Community<sup>1</sup> (Interoperability Directive).

*“The Commission, when appropriate, will propose the measures needed to remedy the problems.”*

2. Section 2.3.4 of Framework mandate to the European Railway Agency adopted on 13 July 2007 – C(2007)3371.

*“..the Agency shall analyse the issue raised by the Commission or by the Committee under the format I.Q (interpretative question, Q.C (questions / clarifications) or similar, and provide answers to them.”*

## 3. Analysis

1. The Q&C 014 states that the functional requirement of the buffers and draw gear are not fully assessable at interoperability constituent level for passenger coaches assessed. The proposal from NB-Rail is to use the CR LOC&OPAS RST TSI in order to assess fully the components.

2. The requirement in the HS RST TSI relates solely on the aspect of rescue, i.e. the rescue of a train, not at all on the component(s) itself.

Clause 4.2.2.2.2 of the HS RST TSI : *“(a) Class 1 trains shall be equipped at each end of the train with an automatic centre buffer coupler as defined in clause 4.2.2.2.2.1. This is to enable such trains to be rescued in the event of a breakdown by another Class 1 train.”*

The conformity assessment of buffers should therefore be limited to interface related to rescue. It is reminded that when assessing a passenger carriages against the HS RST TSI (2008) the train composition shall be stated in the EC declaration of verification (see section 1.1 of the HS RST TSI).

After the publication of both TSIs (HS RST TSI and WAG TSI) an EN standard has been published including a complete specification of buffers with distinction made between passenger coaches and freight wagons.

The proposal from NB Rail to use the EN standard for conformity assessment of the buffer as interoperability constituent is acceptable although the standard cover more aspects than the intention of

---

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 191, 18.7.2008, p. 1–45, as last amended by Directive 2009/131/EC (OJ L 273, 17.10.2009, p. 12–13).

the specification set out in the HS RST TSI. This should be done with agreement between the applicant and the notified body.

**3. Regarding the future revision of RST TSIs:**

The current proposal of the working party revising both HS and CR TSIs (including their merging), related to buffers and draw gear is to keep the specification as set out in the current CR LOC&PAS TSI.

This specification would be applicable to high speed rolling stock.

Therefore, the recommendation from the Agency for the revision of the TSI will take into account the proposal made by NB Rail.

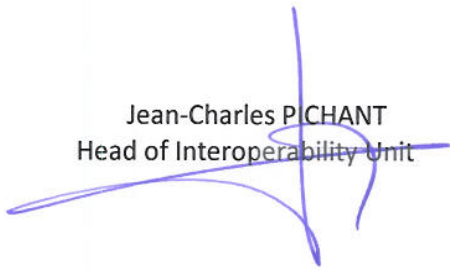
**4. The opinion**

1. The Agency endorse the proposal from NB-Rail related to the conformity assessment procedure of buffers for passenger coaches in the scope of the HS RST TSI.

2. To that end the list of standards in the application guide of the HS RST TSI will be updated with a reference to the EN 15551:2009+A1 Railway application – railway rolling stock – Buffers.

Valenciennes, 28 / 06 / 2012

Jean-Charles PICHANT  
Head of Interoperability Unit





## **ANNEX 1**

Note from DG-MOVE B2 referenced D (2012) 643.673 – 30/05/2012



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

Directorate B - European Mobility Network  
B.2 - Single European Rail Area  
The Head of Unit

Brussels, 30 MAI 2012  
MOVE/B.2/KV/jt D(2012)

Mr  
Jean-Charles Pichant  
European Railway Agency  
120, rue Marc Lefrancq  
F - 59300 Valenciennes

**Subject: Question and clarification NB Rail - QC-INF-009, QC-INF-010, QC-RST-012, QC-RST-013, QC-RST-014**

Dear Mr Pichant,

Please find enclosed a request form for technical opinions regarding questions of NB-Rail QC-INF-009 concerning SRT TSI; QC-INF-010 concerning PRM TSI; QC-RST-012 concerning HS RST TSI; QC-RST-013 concerning CR WAG TSI; QC-RST-014 concerning HS RST TSI and SRT TSI.

In accordance with section 2.3.4. of the framework mandate to the European Railway Agency adopted on 13 July 2007 - C (2007) 3371 - could you please give your technical opinion on these questions within the 2 months from the date of this note.

Yours sincerely,

Sian Prout

cc: Mr Grillo, Mrs Gigantino (MOVE), Mr Verslype (ERA)  
ERA (via "EU.TO.request@era.europa.eu" functional mailbox) D(2012) 643.673