

**Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe**  
**14<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, 13 June 2019, 15:00-18:00**

## **Summary Record**

*Host: SBB Infrastructure*  
*Venue: Hilfikerstrasse 1, 3000 Bern 65, Switzerland*

### **1. Welcome**

Alain Quinet (AQ, SNCF Réseau) and Elisabeth Werner (EW, DG MOVE), PRIME co-chairs, welcomed the participants (about 60 from 35 organisations) and the new member - Slovenian IM - SŽ Infrastruktura.

All EU main IMs are now PRIME members, as foreseen in the 4<sup>th</sup> railway package.

AQ recalled PRIME achievements, including PRIME - RU Dialogue cooperation in interoperability and cross border issues, progress in international contingency management, input from the PRIME financing subgroup to the development of the EU sustainable finance taxonomy. PRIME also published its second Benchmarking report.

### **2. Adoption of agenda and approval of the summary of the 13th meeting**

The agenda was adopted without comments. The summary of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting was approved with minor amendments as previously communicated.

### **3. Institutional matters**

#### *Election of the industry co-chair*

In response to the call launched by EW, a letter of application from Alain Quinet was received. EW asked AQ to share his vision for the next mandate.

AQ recalled that PRIME activities are entirely based on involvement of its members with the view to advance new ideas for the benefit of the sector. He thanked the chairs of the subgroups and the members of his Advisory Board. PRIME has reached the state of maturity and for the next 2 years its activities should not broaden but rather focused. Where appropriate, PRIME's work, including that on KPIs, should be made more visible to the clients, authorities and EU institutions.

On behalf of EC, EW noted that the cooperation between EC and industry co-chairs has been excellent. She appreciated that PRIME focusses on better rail services and that there has been a shift from mere information sharing to true cooperation.

The members had no objections to AQ candidature and he was re-elected as PRIME industry co-chair until June 2021.

### *Activities of the PRIME Industry Advisory Board*

Hans Ring (Trafikverket) explained the role of the Industry Advisory board, which apart from him includes also Bettina Wunsch\_Semmler (DB Netz) and Justus Hartkamp (ProRail). In essence, the Advisory Board acts as a sounding board for AQ to test and discuss different ideas. It is also a forum, where AQ informs the Board members about all recent PRIME initiatives and meetings.

AQ admitted that the name ‘Advisory Board’ might be too ambitious given its rather informal role and proposed to rename it to industry co-chair's Support Team. While hopefully existing members of the Support Team will continue, AQ invited new members to join by sending him an e-mail in the course of next 3 weeks.

It was suggested that the notes from the Support Team meetings should be shared. AQ agreed to share the conclusions of the meetings.

### *Appointment of industry coordinators for the cooperation with European Network of Rail Regulatory Bodies and RU Dialogue*

EW explained that, in response to the call to find coordinators to PRIME cooperation with the European Network of Rail Regulatory Bodies (ENRRB) and Railway Undertakings’ Dialogue (RU Dialogue), which was launched during PRIME 13, the following applications were received:

- LatRailNet, represented by Justina Hudenko, is interested to coordinate the cooperation with ENRRB
- CER, represented by Libor Lochman, is interested to coordinate the cooperation with RU Dialogue.

Members had no objections to the proposed appointments.

Justina Hudenko noted that she would like to focus on other topics than those already being discussed between RNE and ENRBB, such as track access charges, for instance. Libor Lochman said that, in essence he will continue doing what he is doing in CER bringing together the interests of IMs and RUs.

AQ thanked Justina and Libor for volunteering. Members were asked to reach out to the industry coordinators in case subjects relevant for co-discussion with the regulatory bodies or railway undertakings emerge.

## 4. Strategic discussion – Rail’s role in mitigating climate change

The co-chairs participated in the panel discussion, which included Vygantas Vaitkus (Lithuanian Railways), Pier Eringa (ProRail), Joaquin Jiménez Otero (ADIF), Josef Doppelbauer (ERA) and Lea Paties (Shift2Rail).

**EW** launched the discussion underlining that rail is an obvious alternative to other, more polluting transport modes. With 17% of modal share rail freight counts for only 2.4 % of the energy consumption in land transport. 4 trains out of 5 are already running on electricity, and in several countries (such as Sweden, Netherlands, Austria) they use almost exclusively renewable energy.

To achieve the targets of Paris agreement, rail has to become the backbone of land transport. She shared findings and thoughts from two EU level papers:

- The so called ‘internalisation study’ - a comprehensive study assessing the current state-of-play of the internalisation of external and infrastructure costs in all modes, comparing them with transport-related taxes and charges paid by users; and
- EU strategy on climate neutral Europe: 'A Clean Planet for all' –adopted in November last year.

The internalisation study finds that none of the modes covers its total costs. While rail users pay the highest share of the marginal costs they are responsible for, i.e. almost 70%, its biggest challenge is the very high fixed costs necessary to build the railway network, compared to other modes. The areas where the next Commission could possibly focus in the future include revision of the Energy Taxation Directive, the ongoing negotiations on road tolls, the Emission Trading Scheme applicable to intra-EU aviation as well as new taxes on kerosene or plane tickets. Maritime transport and aviation are subject to ongoing international negotiations. For rail, a better modulation of the charges can be considered, the fitness check of state aid rules is ongoing and noise mitigation remains a priority.

The Strategy for climate neutral Europe sets out the European vision to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. By 2050 transport emissions should be 90% lower than in 1990 and this will require an integrated system approach with low and zero emission vehicles, strong increase in rail network capacity, development of alternative fuels and a much more efficient organisation of the transport system, based on innovation and digitalisation. There should be also incentives for behavioural changes as well as global commitments.

The Commission’s strategic vision is a starting point for further discussion. Member States have already submitted to the Commission their draft National Climate and Energy Plans and targets which should encompass how national policies will contribute to the EU long-term strategy. Consultations with regions and business associations are ongoing. On this basis, the EU will adopt and submit an ambitious strategy by early 2020 to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as requested under the Paris Agreement.

### **Reactions from participants:**

- the transport sector overall with growing emissions is going in wrong direction and rail has a competitive advantage in implementing the climate neutral vision;
- in addition, rail itself has to step up its efforts in becoming greener (e.g. reduce construction and maintenance emissions) and contribute to circular economy (e.g. by reusing gravel; using alternative less scarce materials);

- all modes have to contribute and therefore policy developments in the future should ensure higher level of internalisation also by other modes;
- railways are both affected by climate change (forest fires, floods) and contributing to its mitigation.

**Vygantas Vaitkus** shared the long term strategy of the Lithuanian Railways with a major focus on climate change mitigation, including a significant increase of electrification, the use of renewable energy and actions to reduce emissions and waste. Rail Baltica line from Tallinn to Warsaw will have a major impact on climate mitigation using most efficient technologies and providing a viable alternative for air travellers.

**AQ** shared experience in assessing socio-economic impacts of rail projects based on the example of HSL Paris-Lyon. These includes time saving and mobility benefits and reduction of CO2 emissions. If the shadow price of carbon were taken into consideration, the climate benefits of rail projects would become significantly higher. Construction phase emissions can be significant and, depending on project, it can take several years (13 years in the case of Paris Lyon HSL) to off-set them from the savings achieved during operations.

EW recalled that the EC internalisation study included also an [Update of the Handbook on external costs](#), which provides agreed values to be used for evaluations.

Pier Eringa recalled ProRail's motto – Going, Growing, Green! The company is working with contractors to reduce maintenance emissions and looking for concrete practical ways to shift passengers from planes to trains (for example between Amsterdam and Brussels) and freight from roads to rails. At EU level, the ambition should be to connect Europeans with trains. For that an enhanced intergovernmental cooperation and political commitments are needed.

#### **Reactions from participants:**

- changes are needed both at the level of policy and operations;
- IMs should further develop their decarbonisation strategies in order to support the rail sector's climate targets, given that at the moment only few IMs have comprehensive decarbonisation strategies; ;
- level playing field in taxation, legislation needs to be revised in this regard;
- IMs ability to absorb the passengers and freight shifting from road and planes to rail could be challenging, at least in some part of the network; IMs need to increase the capacity rapidly and need funding for that purpose;
- Swedish government has asked to assess how capacity can be used better on the network; eg. there are still many empty trains running;
- KPI subgroup should investigate whether it would be possible to have a KPI on empty runs.

**Joaquin Jiménez Otero** gave an overview of positive rail developments in Spain and underlined that railways have to communicate proactively what they have achieved, otherwise the public only sees what is spent and what is not working. Spain has a comprehensive climate mitigation strategy including energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, decarbonisation, resilience improvements and behavioural changes. Biggest savings are expected from the modal shift to rail and in Spanish network, there is sufficient free capacity available to accommodate it. Liberalisation of the passenger market is key in generating new traffic.

**Josef Doppelbauer** underlined that it is essential that rail will find its true place in the mobility of tomorrow – which is a fully integrated transport system seeking an overall optimum for a fastest, most efficient, least polluting and safest trip. Defining and establishing such a system by 2050 will be important for the society and the rail sector. Safe affordable and connected railways is key for social cohesion. The aim should be to set up conditions where the people would have a free choice based on a fair price. Open data are in this context important because passengers and operators need to be informed about all choices. We need to continue efforts to eliminate technical operational and organisational barriers in Europe. In this context 16 June 2019 is an historic date when ERA enters into its new role as a EU rail system authority.

**Lea Paties** explained that the main objective of Shift2Rail is to support rail's competitiveness. Everything that improves the performance of railways and attracts new customers is also good for environment. More concretely, Shift2Rail supports:

- energy efficiency of rail related systems (rolling stock, signalling, infrastructure);
- automated train operations – will contribute to more efficient driving;
- train positioning – helps to free up capacity;
- research on renewable energy and alternative fuels.

Shift2 Rail intends to publish a catalogue of different solutions offers and PRIME members will be informed.

#### **Reactions from participants:**

- High speed connection between Rome-Milan has proved that good rail connections can easily win over plane travellers
- Rail projects could apply for a [Vision certification](#), which provides an independent assessment of the sustainability of infrastructure projects. RFI project between Naples and Bari was the first project to get the highest possible 'platinum' certificate.

#### **EW and AQ concluded:**

- rail needs to communicate proactively on its benefits and achievements; associations are on the forefront while IMs have to give them material; including e.g. participation in Vision certification;
- for the next PRIME Plenary, AQ invites IMs send him highlights of their contribution to climate mitigation. In cooperation with the Support Team, PRIME will prepare a draft paper on Rail's contribution to sustainable mobility, based on the main points discussed today. This may include proposals for the work programme of the next Commission;
- adaptation to climate change and climate resilience are open topics and needs to be discussed more in the future;
- operational efficiency needs to be enhanced to be able to accommodate more rail traffic; from the EU perspective the cross border capacity and the capacity for rail freight in particular need to improve;
- KPI work should help us to identify where the problems are and how they evolve over time.

## 5. PRIME deliveries

The co-chairs thanked subgroups for their work and noted that written debriefs were received from the Financing, Charges, KPI and Safety Culture subgroups. For oral debrief the floor was given to Rui Coutinho (RC), the chair of the KPI and Benchmarking subgroup from IP Portugal.

### *2017 PRIME Benchmarking report*

RC underlined the continuous progress of the work of the subgroup including better data coverage, new version of the IT tool, new members of the group and establishment of a regular business cycle with deadlines for data submission, verification and reporting. He presented also the main industry trends.

AQ noted that it is important to exhibit the European trends so that the individual IMs could identify how they relate to those. He also asked how PRIME members have used the results of the Benchmarking report for internal and external communication. SNCF Réseau for instance intends to present in September the report to French authorities, regulators and customers.

#### **Reactions from participants:**

- in the light of the recent negative experience with media coverage, one member was concerned about insufficient quality and comparability of punctuality data; he also called for an increase of the number of participating IMs; comparability concerns were raised also by another member;
- another member noted that they shared the report with their Board and as a result, there was a commitment for more active participation in the future;
- benchmarking report is useful for identifying partners for benchmarking
- ;
- in principle, using the PRIME KPI report (which are prepared by IMs themselves) as a common EU reference point, is an opportunity for a more consistent and comprehensive media communication on IM's' performance.

The co-chairs concluded that, for future publications,

- in addition to quality improvements, additional measures are necessary to prepare a communication package. This should focus on correct interpretation and positive messages.

### *PRIME thematic report on Punctuality*

RC presented some findings of the report, which was a first 'deep dive' of the KPI and Benchmarking subgroup into a concrete topic. The report looked into target setting, influencing factors and measurement complexity, infrastructure related root causes, punctuality in rail freight and different incentives put in place by IMs for punctuality improvement.

One member indicated their interest to find a peer group to follow up the work on punctuality.

### *Follow up of earlier strategic discussions - Young Professionals initiative*

Infrabel proposed to take the lead for the young professionals initiative as discussed during PRIME 13. They will arrange a meeting with IMs' human resource people in Q3 2019, to discuss a possible PRIME Young Professionals programme as well as any other topics the members might be interested in the domain of human resource management.

EW noted that an EU Blueprint initiative to support the skills development in Railways is about to be set up. Application deadline for proposals will be in February 2020, while the projects will be launched by the end of the next year. These may include a wide range of initiatives, such as pilot trainings; promotion of the attractiveness of the sector as a career choice and deployment of the apprenticeship marketplace.

DG MOVE will be in contact with the industry for the preparation of the call for. CER has been involved in the preparations of the EU Blueprint initiative and can provide further information, if needed. Infrabel will coordinate the preparations with all PRIME members.

### *MoU on mutual recognition of force majeure cancellations of train paths*

Maria Alvarez (ADIF, PRIME Charges group co-chair) presented the topic on behalf of Charges Subgroup. Currently *force majeure* cancellations on one network are in general not recognised by other IMs and RUs often pay cancellation fees for reasons beyond their control. As regard the definition of force majeure, the concept of E-GTC-I (European General Terms and Conditions of use of railway infrastructure) negotiated by RNE and CIT has been found most useful. However, at the end important is not a common definition but mutual acceptance of force majeure cancellations. Although the subgroup in general supports the idea of a common approach to not levy cancellation charges for international train runs interrupted by force majeure, several practical problems need first to be addressed, including identification of international trains by all IMs, number of force majeure cancellations, financial impacts as well as technical challenges of communication. Therefore, the subgroup proposed to have a pilot project, in close cooperation with RNE, on the Rhine-Alpine rail freight corridor. Final goal is to sign a Memorandum of understanding between all IMs by the end of this year.

The participants had no objections to the proposed way forward. RNE noted that RNE and CIT have not agreed on a Force Majeure definition, instead E-GTC-I referred to the COTIF Contract of Use of Infrastructure.

### *Planning of future topics and other deliverables*

EW informed the participants on:

- **Safety Twinning2** – a follow up of Twinning1, which was coordinated by PRIME and Network Rail two years ago. Twinning2 will last longer and a broader range of participants. Its aim is to share experiences, expectations, and concerns among different stakeholders with the view of achieving common understanding on how to move towards safety culture. ERA will have an advisory role. The call will be launched in summer 2019.
- **Timetable Redesign project (TTR) would require a revision of the Delegated Act on Schedule for the allocation process.** The Recast Directive foresees explicitly that the IMs

should be consulted on the revision of this Annex. EC will be in contact with Stefano Castro from RFI, who is the chair of the implementing acts subgroup to launch respective discussions.

- **Support to PRIME activities foreseen from the CEF Programme support action.** EC has foreseen to support PRIME in following 3 domains:
  - performance benchmarking (similarly to current arrangement);
  - support to thematic studies and ad hoc projects– such as punctuality study conducted this year or the young professionals programme – if taken forward;
  - support to organisation of major events (Plenary meetings and events with external participants) and preparation of the communication strategy.

Funding decisions will be based on PRIME Annual Work Programme, which is discussed and approved by the Plenary

AQ noted that, like in the last year, PRIME co-chairs and Support Team will meet the subgroup chairs in September to discuss the work of subgroups in detail. This meeting will also pave the way for PRIME 2020 Work Plan, which will be further discussed during PRIME Plenary in autumn.

## 6. Priorities for the 2019-2024 Commission

Monika Heming (EIM) and Libor Lochman (CER) presented the priorities proposed by their associations.

EIM emphasised that IMs have to work on connecting rail infrastructure seamlessly into multimodal transport system. Their focus should cover the whole value chain. ITC infrastructure, systems and data need to be developed to enable stable ground for new solutions. EC and national governments should truly consider the strategic role of rail IMs and try to ensure that resources are available to develop the new system and provide new services. Evaluations of TEN-T and RFC Regulations are important milestones. ERTMS deployment needs to progress.

CER proposals for the next Commission were approved by their General Assembly already in February 2019. CER members see railways playing an essential role in society, supported by sufficient investment, level playing field between the modes, energy efficiency and transport security. Main policy developments should include implementation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Package Technical Pillar, TEN-T and RFC evaluations, implementation of TTR, and new CEF framework. Overall, rail should be seen as a contributor to more sustainable mobility.

AQ called the members to reflect on what could be the specific contribution of PRIME in this context. He proposed to continue the discussion in PRIME 15 in November with the aim to prepare a 3-part document covering (1) operational issues addressed by PRIME, (2) their link with the objectives as presented by EIM and CER, and (3) how IMs/PRIME can contribute to the climate change mitigation.



## **7. Information points**

EW draw the attention of the participants that in advance to the meeting information fiches were distributed on following topics:

- CEF Programme Support Action on Issues Log Book;
- Route compatibility and RINF;
- Update on 4th Railway Package latest developments (technical pillar);
- Handbook International Contingency Management;
- Update on the Evaluation of the Rail Freight Corridors Regulation;
- RFC-CNC Cooperation on infrastructure priorities.

Members are welcome to contact EC in case they have any questions or suggestions as regards these topics.

## **8. Any other business**

The co-chairs had the following announcements:

- next PRIME Plenary meeting will take place on 18 November 2019 pm in Brussels, hosted by EC;
- PRIME Subgroups chair's coordination meeting with AQ and EW will take place in Paris on 20 September pm, hosted by SNCF Réseau;
- Third meeting on contingency handbook and Issues log management will take place in Brussels on 17 June, hosted by EC;
- members were asked to participate actively in language pilots.

## Annex – List of participants

### MEMBERS

ADIF	Jimenez Otero, Joaquin
	Álvarez, María
Banedanmark	Hansen, Kasper G.
BLS Netz AG	Wyder, Daniel
CFL	Bombardella, Alain
	Werdel, Henri
DB Netz AG	Wunsch-Semmler, Bettina
Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency	Nummelin, Markku
	Piironen, Juha
GYSEV/Raaberbahn	Mosoczi, Andrea
HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o.	Žubrinić, Marko Zdravko
	Lalić, Elena
Infrabel	Dierickx, Michaël
	De Troch, Jolien
Infraestruturas de Portugal	Coutinho, Rui
Irish Rail (Iarnrod Éireann)	Reidy, Michael
JSC LatRailNet	Hudenko, Justīna
Latvian Railway	Ozols, Maris
	Vygantas Vaitkus
Lietuvos Geležinkeliai	
LISEA	Le Caignec, Herve
MAV Hungarian State Railways Co.	Ronai, Peter
	Volentne Sarvari, Piroska
National Railway Company CFR S.A.	Nicolaos, Jean
	Preoteasa, Traian
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	Davey, Steve
PKP Polskie Linie Kolejowe S.A.	Majchrzak, Jarosław
	Maszkiewicz, Urszula
ProRail	Eringa, Pier
	Hartkamp, Justus
Rete Ferroviaria Italiana	Gentile, Maurizio
	Castro, Stefano
SBB Infrastructure	Schmalz, Georg
Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking	Paties, Lea
SNCF RESEAU	Quinet, Alain
	Mazataud, Paul
SŽ Infrastruktura, d.o.o.	Klobučar, Franc
SZDC Czech Republic	Svoboda, Jiri
	Kodysova, Anna

Trafikverket  
Trasse Schweiz AG  
Zeleznice Slovenskej republiky (ZSR)

European Commission

Ring, Hans  
Isenmann, Thomas  
Tkac, Juraj  
Niznan, Michal  
Farkas, Rastislav  
Werner, Elisabeth  
Kroon, Annika  
Fitch, Keir  
Castelletti, Maurizio

## **OBSEVERS**

CER

EIM

ERA

RNE

Lochman, Libor  
Besser, Hans  
Schreiner, Britta  
Heiming, Monika  
De Bruijn, Guus  
Roussel, Sandrine  
Josef Doppelbauer  
Kroll, Joachim

## **VISITORS FOR PANEL:**

Shift2Rail JU

Paties, Lea