

**PRIME- RUD Meeting
19 November 2019**

**Information point:
Programme Support Action on Issues Log Book**

From: EC

– For Information –

1. OBJECTIVES AND BACKGROUND

Boosting international rail freight is a long-term objective endorsed by the Commission, Member States and the railway sector itself. In spite of the work of Commission over the last two decades to create a single European Rail Area and eliminate obstacles to cross border operations, constant feedback from RUs is that many difficulties remain.

To help us understand why, and also to provide practical support, the Commission launched the « Issues Log Book » (ILB) in May 2018 aiming at solving interoperability operational issues that hinder freight cross-border traffic. The ILB offers both consultancy and direct financial support for projects developing solutions to the issues identified. The sector highlighted three priorities on which core groups have worked very actively. Some solutions are already available, with others under active development. The priorities are:

1. Braking sheets and braking performances
2. Tests and checks at the border
3. Real time communication about train composition

The Commission and ERA have provided solutions to most of the existing ILB problems, such as harmonized braking sheets, trusted handover based on harmonised European rules, more flexibility on the language regime, IT solutions for real time communications, harmonization of rear-end signal in Operation TSI, and many others. Those solutions now need to be deployed at EU level and stakeholders need to make a final effort to implement them to be able to finally solve those problems.

We are available to provide further details of the solutions identified. We hope you will ensure your colleagues are fully aware of the them, and also provide us with feedback so we can assess their usefulness.

Interoperability approach: Process of reviewing and cleaning up of national rules

Under the 4th rail package Member States had to review the national safety and operational rules to ensure they were still justified. Currently, a deep analysis from ERA of all national safety and operational rules is ongoing – we expect this to be largely completed this year.

Member States have already agreed to eliminate a number of rules, but discussions with ERA are ongoing in other cases. If this informal approach fails, the Commission may and will issue decisions addressed to the Member States concerned requesting to modify or repeal the national rules in question.

Note also that, the new Operation TSI, Regulation (EU) 2019/773, in force since June 2019 and applicable as of June 2021, further improves the harmonisation of operational requirements at European level and limits the scope of national rule considerably. The list of areas where national rules are still possible in compliance with EU law are identified in the OPE TSI's Appendix I. National rules covering areas outside this list, including on ERTMS, are not allowed anymore as from June 2021, the full entry into force of the OPE TSI.

2. EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION BY INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGERS

Cooperation with authorities and all stakeholders is necessary and key to finding solutions to the issues. Infrastructure Managers should have a proactive role in cooperating with authorities for:

- The harmonisation of national safety and operational rules
- The implementation of the solutions identified in the ILB activities in their network, with focus on pilot projects.

Note also that the objective is not simply to move rules from national level to IM provisions – rather it is to eliminate them completely where possible (relying instead on rail undertakings safety management systems), or harmonise at EU level.

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