

Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe
9th meeting, 17 November 2016, 10:00 – 15:50, Brussels, BE

Summary Record

Approval of the agenda and of the summary record of previous meeting

The agenda was approved with some sequence adjustments.

The Summary record of PRIME 8, as amended to reflect comments received from CER, Network Rail, PKP PLK and Trafikverket, was adopted.

Nature of the meeting

PRIME holds two Plenary meetings per year, attended at high management level. The meeting was hosted by the European Commission (EC) and co-chaired by the industry (SNCF Réseau, FR, Deputy Director General) and EC (DG MOVE, Deputy Director General). 24 industry members were present along with the representatives from the European Union Agency for Railway (ERA) and DG MOVE. The Platform's deliberations are not open for public, but all meeting documents are published on the PRIME website (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/multisite/primeinfrastructure/en/events>).

Points discussed

The co-chairs welcomed the participants and recalled the mission of PRIME in driving for a more efficient rail system in Europe.

Three new members - BLS Netz (CH) and Trasse Schweiz (CH) and Lithuanian Railways have joined, PRIME has now 30 member organisations.

Agenda Point 4 - Feedback from subgroups and meetings, approval of subgroup chairs

The co-chairs opened the feedback session of PRIME subgroups.

- KPI and benchmarking subgroup

The subgroup chair (Trafikverket, SE) reported on the progress in fine tuning the approach to performance benchmarking supported by consultancy. The subgroup chair distributed the Version 1.0 of the KPI catalogue, which will be the basis for the first benchmarking exercise. He also reported on the progress in developing IT tools for data management and reporting. A balanced scorecard approach along with hierarchy of indicators has been introduced.

In 2017 the KPI group aims to launch IT tools (including web-based dashboard reports), conduct a first benchmarking exercise and issue an annual report. The group would like to improve data coverage and quality and prove that the framework developed is sound. Focus

will on delivery to PRIME members. As a second step, it will be necessary to agree on an approach to data ownership and accessibility rules. Ultimately, PRIME should become a 'standard-setter' in industry benchmarking. It will work with other organisations to harmonise definitions and indicators so as to reduce administrative burdens.

In the future, PRIME 10 needs to decide on the governance of the PRIME KPI exercise as from 2018 onwards. For instance, it could continue to work as today with one IM in lead of the subgroup and data administration; alternatively, services of associations, such as CER, EIM or RNE, could be used.

In the ensuing discussion participants appreciated the 4-level hierarchy of indicators (High Level Industry KPIs, Benchmarking KPIs, Additional performance indicators and Supporting indicators) and suggested that security indicators may need to be promoted to higher levels. Regarding data administration, some participants supported the idea of RNE becoming an administrator, given its technical capabilities. Others however underlined that, given the goal of benchmarking and mutual learning, data collection should never become a mere reporting/statistics exercise, and hence the administration of KPIs should be kept within PRIME.

The EC co-chair recalled that the tasks of the European Network of Infrastructure Managers (ENIM), as foreseen in the 4th Railway Package, include identification of common principles for the monitoring and benchmarking, as well as benchmarking activities themselves. This gives further impetus to the work of the subgroup. It is important that the industry members would maintain full ownership of the exercise so as to continue to enhance methodology, participation and data quality and to maximise the value added for IMs. EC has provided financial assistance to the work of the group in 2016 and will do so also in 2017 (200 000 EUR, of which 100 000 EUR for the IT system).

The industry co-chair recalled the principle of cost-effectiveness and importance of reducing administrative burdens.

- Digitalisation subgroup

On behalf of the subgroup chair (DB Netz, DE), SNCF Réseau (FR) reported on the work of the subgroup and its future plans.

The group has investigated the major disruptive developments triggered by digitalisation to ensure that the sector will be ready to embrace new technologies. In 2017 the group has planned to work on the trial installation of the future IM and present a test facility. It will focus on the following projects and tools: Building Information Model, Simulation & Optimization, Data Analytics and Big Data Sensing. Also, an e-Catalogue of digital projects, giving an overview of ongoing or planned digitalisation projects of member organisations, is in the process of being set up (to be operated by RNE).

Participants appreciated the work done by the group. They recalled the importance of ensuring synergies with other initiatives such as the portal of last mile infrastructure, Shift2Rail and to cooperate with the digital subgroup of the RU Dialogue. Enhancing multimodality should be among the goals of deploying digital technologies. They appreciated the e-catalogue as a tool for sharing best practice and enabling 'quick wins'. Even if operated by RNE, the e-catalogue should remain under the ownership of PRIME (no RNE logo) and must be linked to the PRIME website. For the time being it will be open only to PRIME members.

The suitability of the Building Information Model for rail business was discussed. Even though developed for the construction sector, it can be used for developing stations and infrastructure, but only if based on common standards; otherwise it becomes too costly.

The industry co-chair concluded the discussion by underlining that focus and prioritisation are important, as are also the objectives of interoperability and a Single Rail Market.

The subgroup has agreed that the current chair will hand over the work to a new chair (Network Rail, UK). The Plenary co-chairs thanked the current subgroup chair for the remarkable progress made on this challenging topic.

- Implementing acts subgroup

The subgroup chair (RFI, IT) informed the participants about the results of the discussion on the draft implementing act on *Access to rail related services and service facilities*. The act aims to define the procedure and criteria for access to services following the principles of transparency, efficient use of the capacity and the independence of service operators.

While appreciating the effort and the necessity of the act, the subgroup has suggested the EC to take better into account the existing working practices (including those developed by Rail Freight Corridors) and avoid too prescriptive and ‘one size fits all’-type rules which can hinder functioning of the market. A reasonable transitional period would be also necessary.

EC has noted these concerns and will issue a revised draft by the end of 2016. As a next step, after having discussed the draft act with different stakeholders bilaterally, EC will organise at the beginning of 2017 a meeting bringing together infrastructure managers, service facility operators, railway undertakings, regulatory bodies and representatives of Member States. The current plan is to adopt the act in mid-2017.

Participants appreciated the contribution and outcome of the subgroup work.

- PRIME-Regulatory bodies dialogue

EC, DG MOVE debriefed the participants about the PRIME-ENRRB (European Network of Rail Regulatory Bodies) meeting in October.

The following topics were discussed: RNE project on redesign of international timetabling, coordination of infrastructure maintenance works, draft implementing act on access to service facilities, potential synergies in market monitoring activities and methods for traffic estimates while determining of track access charges. The third PRIME-ENRRB was agreed to be held in autumn 2017, to be hosted by an IM. In addition, 2 workshops are planned in early 2017 - on charging/mark-ups (hosted by EC) and an annual RNE-ENRRB meeting (hosted by RNE). On market monitoring, EC will organise a follow-up with representatives of PRIME and IRG-Rail market monitoring working group).

- Financing subgroup

The subgroup industry co-chair (SNCF Réseau, FR) gave an overview of the subgroup meeting bringing together investors and IMs to discuss potential rail projects. While IMs face an increasing demand for projects, available public funds are shrinking, creating a push for innovative means of financing. While institutional investors in general like infrastructure projects, investing in rail infrastructure in particular might be challenging due to a higher risk of delays and cost overruns, and strong reliance on public support. PPP-like structures (as

opposed to concessions) are therefore more appropriate to secure rail financing. To that end, investors have shown real interest and are ready to assist IMs in finding the most appropriate financing structures.

The subgroup EC co-chair (DG MOVE) underlined the widening gap between the investment needs and available public funds. CEF grants will be fully used in 2017 and to leverage the scarce EU resources, there will be an overall shift towards blending EU grants with private financing, e.g. via a CEF Blending Call. Leverage through innovative financing will be a trend also for the post-2020 financial framework.

In 2017 the group aims to facilitate a setup of innovative financing solutions on concrete railway projects, enrich and refine the 2016 European benchmark on the financing of maintenance, renewals and enhancement and develop comparison of risk-sharing, credit enhancement and guarantee schemes.

In the follow up discussions, the participants heard that in conditions of massive oversubscriptions, even some high-quality rail projects had not qualified for CEF funding. Furthermore, in conditions of reduced national subsidies, funding maintenance works becomes increasingly an issue. EFSI, in its current setup, is not necessarily more beneficial for IMs than a market based borrowing.

EC noted that the upcoming CEF blending call will provide a specific product to benefit rail IMs. Maintenance is becoming more of a subject in various discussions of railway financing.

The Plenary con-chairs emphasised the need to move on with financing solutions of concrete projects, given that the general framework is in place.

Agenda Point 5 – Security

Network Rail reported on the results of the second ad hoc security meeting in Oslo. Terrorism is the key security threat; low level criminality has also an impact, but less substantial. A significant variety in domestic counter-terrorist legislation exists and any EU level measures should bear in mind that there is no 'one size fits all' solution. Security measures should be flexible, scalable and proportionate in order to account for particularities of different situations and ensure business continuity. The suggestion is to leverage the success of safety management policy for security management.

PRIME should develop relations across the European (and wider) rail industry by building strong links with membership bodies (e.g. CER, EIM, UIC), the European structures and Member States' national transport/security bodies.

EC (DG MOVE, A.5) presented the results of the EC study for assessing policy options at the EU level to improve security of high-speed and international rail services. The preliminary conclusions show that procedure-based security measures yield results relatively quickly compared with engineering interventions. Security measures should combine the pressure to act with appropriate freedom of manoeuvre to reflect local circumstances. Any recourse to mandatory requirements will be controversial, so focus in most cases should be on Member States demonstrating that suitable arrangements are in place, while specific approaches might vary. The intention is indeed to use the elements of a safety management system for security policy. The final report is expected to be ready in December 2016. DG MOVE will release it

to stakeholders for commenting and will conduct further analysis before drafting proposals in 2017.

The participants expressed their support for the work done and emphasised that security is not a railway problem, but a national/EU-wide problem, where rail is only part of the picture. Therefore, a holistic approach is necessary with good connections with law-enforcement authorities and other players. It is necessary to define the threat and identify how to respond; focus must be on prediction. We should learn from other sectors, in particular from aviation.

The industry co-chair noted that communication strategy at political level is also vital to avoid overreactions. The EC co-chair underlined that EC is now better geared towards a holistic approach given that Julian King is a new Commissioner in office in charge of Security Union.

Agenda Point 6 - ERTMS

The ERTMS European coordinator presented the recently adopted new ERTMS Deployment Plan, which has been developed in cooperation with stakeholders and is based on better data than the previous plan. The cornerstones of the new plan are 'users first' principle, standardised Baseline 3 on-board equipment, interoperable and compliant infrastructure and cost-competitive products. A Breakthrough Programme is also a part of the framework, including support to the supply industry.

ERA presented the activities of the ERTMS stakeholder platform. A collective and disciplined approach enabling interoperability is crucial and the main task of the Platform is to facilitate a synchronised approach, with the goal of having a single compatible train operation system.

Questions raised in the follow-up discussions concerned the connection of Spain and Portugal to the rest of the ERTMS network by the Deployment plan and attribution of responsibilities for equipping the stations.

The EC co-chair noted that given the importance of ERTMS deployment, EC has made substantial efforts to provide financial support, however funds are scarce. Therefore, also for ERTMS projects, focus should be on the use of innovative financial instruments and the CEF blending call.

Agenda Point 7 - Strategic discussion: the future of rail infrastructure

Trafikverket (SE) presented the main trends in infrastructure management from their view-point. It was emphasised that (1) infrastructure management should become more efficient (i.e. doing more for less funding) and that (2) it is vital to improve the use of available capacity. CEOs must understand and foster these issues thoroughly so as to give the right push forward. EU policy should focus on enabling railways in the context of multimodal transport network with seamless connections for the end users.

Participants expressed their readiness to share good practices about e.g. using more energy efficient technologies, automation, solutions for resilience improvement and cost-effective maintenance. Given that many services are outsourced, it is important to ensure that IMs maintain in-house knowledge and competences about critical processes and assets.

The industry co-chair called the participants to consider also environmental aspects and the impact of climate change on transport infrastructure. These are immediate issues affecting

investment and maintenance strategies. A higher frequency of extreme events (e.g. floods) has already led to an increase in insurance premiums and new projects face resistance and higher preparatory costs due to environmental concerns. Rail has comparative advantage as being traditionally considered as an environmentally friendly mode. However, other sectors are moving forward quickly and to maintain this advantage, rail must be more proactive in environmental discussions and strive to improve its environmental performance.

The EC-co-chair suggested that during the meeting in June 2017 PRIME should hold a thematic discussion on the environmental performance of rail. The November PRIME meeting could focus on a strategic discussion about railways in multimodal context, with possible presence of Commissioner for Mobility and Transport. The participants agreed, emphasising that fewer issues with deeper focus for future PRIME meetings would be a good approach. Strategic discussions could also involve on an ad hoc basis the final users of the rail transport – passengers, shippers and terminal operators.

Agenda Point 8 - Shift2Rail – state of play and the future

Shift2Rail presented the reference framework, key objectives and state of play of the Joint Undertaking. Shift2Rail has 8 founding members (including Trafikverket and Network Rail) and 19 associated members. In addition, at least 30% of the Union contributions should come through calls for non-members. Its long-term plans are presented in a multi-annual action plan, containing descriptions of R&I activities worth about EUR 777 million. The 2017 call for proposals was published in November, with a deadline for submissions on 30 March 2017. Activities will start on 1 September 2017.

PRIME members asked how realistic it is to achieve the initial goals of Shift2Rail. It was replied that in other sectors innovation is much quicker and if rail will not get on move now, it will fall even more behind. The JU is now progressing with its activities as planned and is very committed to deliver.

Agenda Point 9 - Joint RU Dialogue-PRIME meeting

CER proposed a framework for implementation of the Sector Statement on rail freight. These topics required working in a comprehensive manner with the whole sector, in particular to improve the performance of rail freight corridors, usage of the language regime for train drivers and developing mutually beneficial KPIs. The need to have a joint meeting between PRIME and the RU Dialogue was recalled, suggesting that joint sessions should take place at least once per year. In addition, RUs could be invited on ad hoc basis to PRIME subgroup meetings on specific issues.

While agreeing that the cooperation with the RU Dialogue is pertinent, the participants underlined that topics and priorities for CEO-level discussion must be chosen wisely. It is also crucial not to duplicate the work done within other fora. For the implementation of the Sector Statement, it is vital to move on quickly and engage final users; the more concrete the questions are, the better answers can be developed.

The industry co-chair concluded that a plenary level RU Dialogue/PRIME discussion will be necessary and that he will discuss with CER the agenda and arrangements. The date proposed

preliminarily is 28 March 2017 in Brussels. The EC co-chair called on the members to commit to high level presence during this meeting.

Agenda Point 10 - Safety

Network Rail, chairing the subgroup on Safety Culture, presented the work of the safety culture subgroup. The group has developed draft models for safety conversations and for learning from investigations and 'close calls'. The focus of the work of the sub-group for 2017 will be the delivery of the safety twinning programme (involving IMs from 12 countries, financed by EU) and the trailing of the draft maturity measures within these visits. Network Rail is the coordinator for the twinning consortium. Learning will be shared at a conference at the end of the twinning year.

ERA presented the new safety alerts IT tool 'SAIT' developed by ERA. It was emphasised that a positive safety culture, as promoted by PRIME subgroup, is a prerequisite of effective implementation of SAIT, which aims to share information about new or poorly understood risks linked to defects of technical equipment. The tool is a simple web application, accessible from computers and mobile devices and is open to railway undertakings, IMs, maintenance entities and other sector actors.

The Agency is also in process of completing a 'big data' study and is looking for volunteers among IMs to test to what extent such systems can be used for drawing safety conclusions.

PRIME members emphasised the need to ensure that the information in SAIT will not be used for legal blaming. It was also suggested to align the terminology with that of the UIC rail lexicon so as to ensure a common understanding. They also asked about the link between SAIT and occurrence reporting.

ERA emphasised that any alert should be raised in a factual manner and manufacturers can reply to the raised concerns. Occurrence reporting is an umbrella term of 2 systems - safety alert tools and safety management data system. The former is implemented through SAIT; regarding the latter, it is still under discussion whether an EU-level system would be necessary.

Agenda Point 11 - Future of PRIME as the European Network of Rail Infrastructure managers

EC (DG MOVE, C.3) recalled the 2 reasons necessitating the revision of PRIME Working Arrangements: (1) The formal mandate and responsibilities of the European Network of Infrastructure Managers (ENIM) foreseen under the 4th Railway Package and (2) revised rules applicable to Commission expert groups as from May 2016.

PRIME 2017 work programme should already take into account the new ENIM tasks such as development of the Union rail infrastructure, tackling cross-border bottlenecks and enhancing cross-border cooperation on charging and infrastructure capacity allocation.

Regarding membership, the revised Directive 2012/34/EU foresees that all Member States have to ensure that their main IMs participate; the participation of other EU IMs and IMs from non-EU European countries will be optional. EU-industry co-chairing can continue.

The changes triggered by the new rules applicable to Commission expert groups are mostly technical. One of them is the requirement that as from 1 January 2017 all industry members

must register in the EC transparency register. Many IMs already have done so and EC will send a request to the rest. CER and EIM agreed to assist their members with the registration process, if needed.

The EC co-chair informed the participants about the letter from PRIME Swiss members SBB, BLS and Trasse Schweiz, where they expressed the hope that ENIM would remain open for non-EU states. The EC-co-chair confirmed that the intention is to keep PRIME open to all European rail infrastructure managers.

The industry co-chair proposed to establish a working group for revision of PRIME Working Arrangements including the representatives of co-chairs, main associations (EIM, CER and RNE) and two infrastructure managers. Trafikverket and PKP PLK volunteered.

Members noted that compensation of travel costs to plenary meetings could facilitate participation. For subgroup meetings teleconferences and webinars should be used to reduce the need to travel. It was also noted that meeting documents should be sent earlier to enable proper preparation for meetings.

The co-chairs took note of the concerns and suggestions and acknowledged that PRIME activities have expanded so rapidly that resource limitations have to be taken into account when agreeing on further activities. Compensation of travel costs by EC will be considered, but cannot be guaranteed. Collaborative web tools and phone conferences are already used by several PRIME subgroups and the new "Members' Area" on the PRIME website with a collaborative workspace for each subgroup, will in future provide additional opportunities for that.

Agenda Point 12 - PRIME 2017 Work Plan

The industry co-chair introduced the main features of the draft Work Plan. All existing subgroups will continue and, as mentioned above, a new temporary working group will be created to guide the revision of Working Arrangements and the ENIM transition. New ENIM tasks need to be reflected in the work programme and volunteers among industry members are needed for taking these topics forward (details will be discussed during PRIME 10). However, given the resource limitations, no new subgroups should be created. Environment, development of rail infrastructure and multimodality can be addressed through thematic discussions during future Plenary meetings. Security work will continue as an ad hoc group.

The EC co-chair asked the secretariat to make relevant adjustments in the draft Work Plan and circulate it for members' for approval.

Agenda Point 13 - Information points

EC (DG MOVE C.4) presented the state of play regarding the two topics discussed during PRIME 9:

- Language requirements for train drivers in case of cross-border traffic

The new rules in force since July 2017 provide more flexibility by giving the possibility to exempt train drivers reaching only the next station after the border from the B1 level of language requirements. To help the sector to implement this option, EC has requested ERA to draft practical arrangement outlining the steps to be followed by RUs and IMs in order to submit and assess the requests for derogations. A first draft has been discussed with EC and the final version should be ready before the end of the year.

- Rail Standardisation Coordination Platform for Europe (RASCOP)

A first meeting of the platform took place on 7/11/2016. It is open to all organisations active in Standardisation at European level, and was attended by EC, ERA, CEN-CENELEC, ETSI, CER, EIM, EPTTOLA, ERFA, JPCR, NB-Rail, S2R, UIC, UIRR, UIP, UITP and UNIFE. The platform should contribute to streamlining the European standardisation landscape, to feed the reflexion within the stakeholders on the relation between European and International standards and to foster the promotion of European Standards and TSIs outside of the EU.

Conclusions and next steps

- The following subgroup chairs were (re)appointed:
 - Digitalisation –Network Rail, UK;
 - Financing – Co-chaired by EC (DG MOVE B.2) and SNCF Réseau, FR;
 - Implementing Acts –RFI, IT;
 - KPIs and Benchmarking –Trafikverket, SE;
 - Safety Culture –Network Rail, UK will continue until the Safety Twinning programme will be completed. After that ProRail (NL) will take over the chairmanship of the subgroup.
- A working group including the representatives of EC, SNCF Réseau, CER, EIM, PKP PLK and Trafikverket will be created for revision of PRIME Working Arrangements and for guiding the conversion of PRIME into ENIM.
- The following themes for strategic plenary discussions were agreed:
 - PRIME 10 – Environmental performance of railways;
 - PRIME 11 – Rail in multimodal context.
- PRIME 10 shall discuss:
 - the solutions for administering KPI and Benchmarking work post 2017;
 - how to take on board the new tasks of ENIM as provided for in the 4th Package.
- PRIME-RU Dialogue Plenary meeting shall be held in 2017, possibly on 28 March. Industry co-chair in cooperation with CER will propose topics and arrangements.

Next meeting

PRIME 10 will take place, back to back with the High Level Infrastructure Managers meeting in Sopron (HU) on 12 June 2017.