

Platform for European Rail Infrastructure Managers (PRIME)

First meeting on 28 January 2014

Summary of discussions

The first PRIME meeting was jointly chaired by the Director of Directorate B in DG MOVE, and the President of EIM and CEO of Trafikverket.

(There are currently 15 signatories to the Declaration of Intent – 13 infrastructure managers (IMs), 1 association and DG MOVE.)

Words of welcome by the Director General of DG MOVE, European Commission

The importance of the Platform for a close and fruitful cooperation between the Commission and Infrastructure Managers (IMs) were underlined. The existing differences of opinion between IMs on the 4th railway package should not interfere with this objective.

Focus was made on a strategic thinking to shape a common vision on several rail policy areas (infrastructure development, corridor approach, research and innovation in the context of Shift²Rail). PRIME should be an open and lively forum to exchange best practice, engage in benchmarking, serve as an "early warning mechanism" for infrastructure managers to alert the Commission on the main challenges and advise the Commission on relevant issues linked to both operations and regulatory activities.

The importance of the Platform that should lead towards a more consumer-driven approach for all IMs as well as transparency and openness goals in the work of the Platform were highlighted.

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted without remarks.

Discussion on working arrangements

Some of the key principles (openness, status of expert group, possibility to withdraw at any stage, etc.) of the working arrangements have been evoked.

IMs exchanged views on the Platform's organisation, composition, creation of subgroups and the modalities for exchange of information.

Considering the late circulation of working arrangements' last version, they should be formally adopted at next meeting.

Election of Co-Chair

Members agreed that :

- the current system (one European Commission co-chair and one co-chair representing the industry) should be retained.
- the industry co-chair would have to be reconfirmed each year.

Formal appointment was scheduled at the next meeting of the Platform. Until then the President of EIM and CEO of Trafikverket agreed to serve as interim co-chair.

TEN-T and CEF Framework

Participants exchanged views on the opportunities for IMs, in particular as regards their involvement in the corridors and financing possibilities.

Questions were raised on :

- the timeframe and the necessary consistency between projects and their deadlines vis-a-vis the financial framework.
- the administration of the funds and the cooperation between Rail Freight Corridors and Core Network Corridors.

The upcoming workshop on financial instruments taking place in Warsaw will allow more discussions between DG MOVE and stakeholders.

Deployment of ERTMS on infrastructure

IMs exchanged views on:

- the backward-compatibility between the different baselines and compatibility of equipment between the different suppliers
- the stability of technical specifications
- frequency interferences between commercial telecom signals and GSM-R.
- possible initiatives to accelerate the deployment of ERTMS.
- laboratory testing of ERTMS could avoid the costs and timely procedures of on-track testing.
- EU funding of ERTMS projects.: an indicative amount of 1.2 billion EUR will be available for 2014-2020 at a co-financing rate of 50%.

Exchange of views on recent rail accidents

IMS exchanged views on safety measures ranging from maintenance to training that have already been adopted (e.g. in Netherlands, UK, France or Spain). The following measures were mentioned: the introduction of nominative tickets to identify passengers; the validation of tickets and control with access to platforms; increased requirements to drivers; increased requirements to cabin communication; transparency about results of investigations; campaigns; increased safety rules for workers and minimizing dependency on drivers.

Implementing acts under Directive 2012/34/EU specifically relevant to IMs and Implementation of Directive 2012/34/EU specifically relevant to IMs

DG MOVE presented the state of play on the preparation of six implementing acts under the Directive: framework agreements; authorized applicants; performance schemes; direct costs.

- ERTMS modulated track access charges: a study had been launched to contribute to the Commission's impact assessment, with final results of the study expected not before autumn 2014. An implementing act as required by Directive 2012/34/EU will be adopted by June 2015.
- NDTAC: there is no deadline for the development of this implementing act. The aim is to create incentives for retrofitting with innovative brake blocks. Additional meetings in the SERAC subgroup will be organised this year and a proposal for the implementing act may be put forward to SERAC in the second half of 2014.

Some IMs expressed concerns that the various incentive systems could require a full redesign of their charging system or create undue complexity (e.g. Infrabel). They called for a balanced and cautious approach (e.g. Network Rail and HS1 on framework contracts).

Implementing acts will be a regular item on future agenda of the Platform.

DG MOVE also recalled two evolutions introduced by Directive 2012/34 having particular relevance for IMs: redesign of contractual agreements and indicative rail strategy.

Comments concerned the possibility to use the existing national investment plans as development plans and the relevance of contingency plans to make the system more robust.

Common benchmarking indicators and quality criteria for IMs: future approach

The industry and DG MOVE expressed a range of interests in developing KPIs, while also making use of available material (such as material from the CER infrastructure group) or the experience of Member States where KPIs are part of the national management plan (NL).

Until the 4th railway package imposes otherwise, benchmarking should be made on a voluntary basis through the creation of a subgroup, led by the industry.

Work in the Platform for 2014:

The chosen approach is to identify a limited number of aspects of broad-interest on which cooperation should be focused. These are:

- **ERTMS** (stabilisation, deployment, issues with telecom frequency interferences), including the development of ideas for enhancing deployment ("deployment manager") for discussion.
- **Performance indicators and benchmarking.**
- **Implementing acts under Directive 2012/34.** Further detailed discussion on the various initiatives will be organised. It shall be based on the work conducted in other relevant fora as well as within EIM and CER.
- **The future of infrastructure:** prospective view in quantitative and qualitative terms starting with the safety dimension, based on lessons learnt from recent rail accidents and opportunities to exchange data. A broader discussion should be prepared on long term and strategic challenges for shaping rail infrastructure in the future.-in this context, cross-border cooperation is an important goal of this Platform and will be subject to follow-up.

Proposals for next meeting

The second meeting of the Platform will be organized alongside the EIM CEO's meeting, which takes place in Paris on 27 March 2014. The format proposed is a short meeting during which procedural matters should be solved: formal adoption of the working arrangements, appointment of the industry co-chair and validation of the identified priorities.

The third meeting is scheduled for 4 and 5 June 2014 in Stockholm along with the CER/EIM high-level infrastructure meeting.