

Third meeting of the High-level Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe (PRIME), Stockholm, 4 June 2014

The third meeting of PRIME was introduced by the co-chairs from Trafikverket and DG MOVE B. After the approval of last meeting's minutes and the agenda, PRIME welcomed two new members who signed the Declaration of Intent, i.e. CER and Øresundsbro Konsortiet. At the end of the meeting, RNE also expressed its intention to consider accession to the Platform and to proceed with the internal necessary steps in this sense.

Benchmarking performance: definition of key indicators

PRIME discussed the importance of a common definition of KPIs in order to measure performance, encourage improvements for all and compare with other sectors.

The subgroup dedicated to KPIs definition reported on progress made: several meetings took place to agree on a process, a methodology and some priorities. The subgroup also relied on available work done by ERA,, UIC, the EIM asset management working group and CER. It was decided to focus on performance issues that are directly relevant for the infrastructure managers' performance. First priorities relate to safety performance and ERTMS deployment, for which objectives and six indicators have been defined. The working group is continuing the work to ensure common definitions as foundation for the KPIs, whereafter the working group will initiate data collection and look at developing KPIs on capacity and utilisation. Data collection and transparency will be determinant. PRIME agreed that the work is not to be used for naming and shaming, but rather to create a dynamics that will benefit the IMs and the industry as a whole.

Members welcomed and endorsed the work done so far. The discussion called for keeping KPIs simple and directly focused on infrastructure managers' responsibilities as well as avoiding duplication as relevant work is already carried out by other organisation ERA (safety) but also UIC (punctuality), or UITP. The involvement of the CER KPI working group in this process is desired for the same reasons. Several possibilities exist to anonymise results and ensure transparency without blaming any particular infrastructure manager. The work done on KPIs by PRIME could be of great use for the Commission in its future activities.

Conclusion: PRIME members agreed to continue work in the subgroup and to agree on KPIs on safety and ERTMS at next meeting as reformulated during the discussion and issue a solid report encompassing all available information which does not necessarily need to be disclosed to the general public at this stage. Work should also continue on the performance aspects starting with capacity issue.

Fostering ERTMS deployment

Three detailed notes had been circulated to members to prepare this session.

- *Stability of the system*

PRIME discussed the progress made by ERA to stabilise ERTMS specifications. On 12 June 2014, the RISC committee will be consulted on the revision of the CCS TSI containing the baseline 3 maintenance release 1 and on a harmonised approach for authorisation and change management led by a limited number of experts. In June 2014, stable specifications should therefore be voted allowing for stability and only error correction.

PRIME members welcomed this achievement and noted that the focus should now be on ERTMS deployment. They warned against a risk that engineers and UNIFE focus more on Shift2Rail (S2R).

The possibility of CEF funding for the validation of the backward compatibility report by projects was also discussed.

Conclusion: Members endorsed the proposed approach. They agreed that PRIME should play a role to exchange practices on problems solving. ERA should remain the system authority, also anticipating on its new tasks: conformity with the TSI, discipline of the NSA, and cleaning up unnecessary national rules.

- *Support actions for deployment*

PRIME discussed the opportunity of a program support action with deployment managers under ERA's responsibility.

The discussion focused on the tasks of these deployment managers that would be to update deployment plans. Concerning ERTMS deployment, PRIME also underlined that further discipline of manufacturers is required. S2R is a look to the future, evolution is embedded in S2R, but S2R will not reinvent ERTMS. Definition and decisions on ERTMS should not be in the hands of manufacturers but of institutions. It should be customer-driven.

Conclusion: Members endorsed the idea of deployment managers for which a call for proposals will be launched soon.

- *Telecommunication interferences*

PRIME welcomed the progress made on addressing interferences as described in the circulated note. It was however reported that GSM-R signals may still be too weak in bigger cities to ensure quality. Pressure on regulators should also be reinforced. The need for a new frequency for the future railway communication was also discussed following new band made available by television. Coordination would be required at EU and international levels with the involvement of DG CNECT.

Conclusion: DG MOVE and RFF committed to send each a note to PRIME members with further information on the issue.

Implementing the Single European Rail Area

PRIME stressed the importance of the current preparation of implementing acts defining a series of instruments on economic regulation of rail markets. These concern the qualification of services (new passenger services and articulation between public services and open access), charging issues (direct costs, ERTMS- and noise-differentiated track access charges), capacity management (framework agreement, criteria for applications) etc. PRIME examined the state of play and the timetables of these initiatives. A subgroup has been set up under the chairmanship of Network Rail which organise dedicated sessions of exchanges between DG MOVE and infrastructure managers.

PRIME members had an **exchange of views on ERTMS-differentiated track access charges**. Such system needs to be introduced as requested by EU legislation. Important constraints apply, for example to make it revenue neutral for infrastructure managers and to preserve the competitiveness of the rail sector. Various options are envisaged: baseline scenario, bonus, malus or bonus/malus.

Members drew attention against any punitive or tax system that would affect rail traffic, preferring the bonus or bonus/malus approach. PRIME discussed the relevance of such an incentive when the decision to equip all trains has already been taken by the government, the need for any differentiated treatment between retrofitted vehicles and new ones and possible State aid issues. Members also called for a simple mechanism to avoid making the charging system too complex and administrative burdensome on infrastructure managers. The possibility to grant loans at the investment stage or use more innovative financial instruments was also mentioned.

Conclusion: Members agreed to continue the consultation process on draft implementing acts in the context of the subgroup for which an indicative timetable is being prepared.

Preparation of Next Meeting

Members agreed that next meeting should take place in October and should be hosted by a member. The agenda should reflect the agreed priorities, namely further progress on KPIs, implementing acts but also prepare a broader discussion on strategic priorities for the next Commission. A reflection of infrastructure managers on the future challenges will also be launched to pave the way for a discussion between PRIME and the new Commissioner. PRIME agreed to consider continued cooperation on safety to further develop the existing ERA tool box on the basis of the aviation example of occurrence reporting and exchange of best practice.

Finally, a co-chair (from Network Rail) representing the industry was appointed by consensus and with CER abstention.

Conclusion: Members agreed to identify a suitable date for next meeting in October in coordination with the new Co-Chair and explore possibilities for a member to host it. The agenda for next meeting will be prepared according to the orientations defined in the discussion.