PRIME
Platform of Rail Infrastructure
Managers in Europe

High-level Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe

4th meeting, 24th October 2014, Madrid

1. Welcome

Chairman of ADIF welcomed the participants followed by the two co-chairs - the director of European Mobility network directorate of DG MOVE and the strategy director of Network Rail.

2. Approval of minutes

The agenda was approved as well as meeting minutes from the 3rd PRIME meeting in Stockholm in June 2014.

3. New members

Since the former meeting, Iarnród Éireann – Irish Rail has joined PRIME and has signed the Declaration of Intent.

4. Safety culture workshop

Within the framework of the High Level Infrastructure Meeting, a safety culture workshop was held in London in September and the main findings were presented to the PRIME members based on a survey sent to all rail infrastructure managers. The main findings showed that safety approach varies among different organisations in terms of structure, style, staff, skills and strategy, whilst shared values and system approaches showed a more converging outcome. The presentation reviewed the discussion in London, which included assessing current culture and deciding what to aim for in the long term. It also considered challenges faced, including the need for safety experts to be able to commit to the work of the group.

Network Rail distributed a paper on leadership commitment to safety culture, principles of which were supported by PRIME members.

The European Commission (EC) welcomed the approach and supported the current working group to promote safety culture, assess different approaches to safety management (e.g. rules and risk based approaches), consider the need of establishing an occurrence reporting system for rail safety and proposing a definition for a 'just' safety culture in railways. The issue will also be raised by the EC in the Joint Network Secretariat (JNS), together with the European Railway Agency (ERA).

5. Benchmarking performance

The PRIME subgroup chair presented the work of the PRIME benchmarking subgroup, working on a joint definition for three main categories of key performance indicators (KPIs): safety, punctuality and ERTMS.

The EC supported the work on KPIs as being key for achieving better performance. EC recalled that quick progress would be essential for industry to use the opportunity for setting agenda for performance measurement. It is important to agree on common reference points, while more time can be allowed for adjustments and data collection, if necessary. Therefore a reasonable, but ambitious timeplan with agreed milestones is necessary.

PRIME members discussed the different KPIs for ERTMS, Safety and Punctuality more in detail. In particular a common approach to the KPIs on punctuality, including applicable rounding rules, is necessary to ensure the comparability of results. It was emphasised that KPIs, as agreed by PRIME, are above all for internal management and identification of best practice. For other purposes different data sets and definitions could be continued to be used, given that overall convergence would require more time.

ERA presented its work done with KPIs regarding ERTMS and underlined the importance of useful and useable KPIs, which was supported by several PRIME members asking to stick to a realistic and simple approach. ERA also invited all PRIME Members to cooperate with ERA in developing ERTMS KPIs.

The suggested timeline was also discussed.

7. Implementing the Single European Rail Area

The Commission gave an update on the various implementing acts (direct costs, framework agreements, noise and ERTMS modulated track access charges). These implementing acts have been discussed in the relevant PRIME subgroup. All industry PRIME members agreed that in general implementing acts should take into account existing national realities. They also emphasised the need of safeguarding the financial equilibrium of the accounts of infrastructure managers.

The EC noted that many comments received from the subgroup have already been taken on board. The updated draft texts of implementing acts will be presented to PIRME subgroup in January 2015, whilst seeking for cooperation in finding a joint suitable approach.

8. Future challenges for infrastructure management

EIM briefly presented the new challenges for rail infrastructure managers based on various trends but also expectations. The PRIME members endorsed the note on future challenges in principle but asked to complement it with other aspects, such as asset management, modernisation and digitalisation, especially in terms of how to communicate and respond to customers.

The PRIME members also added that the EC should develop a strategic planning for the entire transport system at the European level, as the objective is finding the best suited transport mode for any transport need. Need for a common approach to internalisation of external costs was also underlined.

The EC asked to further complement the paper by highlighting infrastructure managers' approach to increased resilience to climate change and to explore the potential to work together on a more energy-efficient network. Furthermore, it should build on existing EU initiatives, such as effective implementation of the register of rail infrastructure (RINF) and the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs). The EC suggested also to look into Shift2Rail in relation to PRIME and to discuss the Master Plan of Shift2Rail in one of the upcoming PRIME meetings.

As regards the strategic planning of EU level multimodal transport system, the EC suggested that exploiting the potential of the established framework of the multimodal TEN-T core network corridors could be a first step in this direction. The EC suggested having a presentation on the corridor approach in the next meeting, to be followed by the discussion on funding needs, priorities and opportunities.

10. Digital Railway and ERTMS

Digital Railway

Network Rail presented their concept of the Digital Railway, stating that through speeding up the implementation of ERTMS, they will not only get more capacity but also lower cost than in case of investments into conventional technologies. They also discussed the potential for open data to improve information sharing between infrastructure managers, rail operators and customers to open up new potential markets, drive innovation and improve services.

DG MOVE stated that the EC is planning an initiative obliging all transport operators allowing for a non-discriminatory access to essential travel and traffic data in the future. ERA mentioned that the TSIs on telematics applications are the basic tools for enabling open data.

Radio Communication and its evolution

ERA gave a brief presentation and mentioned more information regarding this topic will come in a separate material. ERA also stated that the current spectrum might not be enough and informed that the World Radiocommunication Conference will make the final decision on distribution of frequencies in 2015.

ERTMS – specification, deployment and financing

DG MOVE made a presentation regarding the latest developments. It explained that the report of the ERTMS co-ordinator will be presented by the end of the year, including a proposal for the breakthrough program. By the end of 2015, DG MOVE intends to revise the ERTMS European Deployment Plan and to adopt a stable specification for Baseline 3. By the end of 2016 there should be an interoperable and compliant infrastructure as well as a clear regulatory framework. DG MOVE is in process to establish ERTMS Deployment Manager.

Members discussed various issues related to ERTMS deployment, including the importance of ensuring backward compatibility (Baseline 3 trains running on Baseline 2 infrastructure).

Cases where the suppliers had not provided all the data needed in order for the IMs to provide feedback regarding the backward compatibility checks were mentioned. DG MOVE stated that if there are any such problems with suppliers, ERA should contact these suppliers in order to move forward.

11. Preparation of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held in Brussels on 5th February 2015.

12. Any Other Business

PRIME will in future use a dedicated website domain as well as logo in communications.

The co-chairs acknowledged ADIF for being excellent hosts and thanked all participants.