

Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe
13th Plenary Meeting, 15 November 2018, 09:00-13:00

Summary Record

Host: DG MOVE

*Venue: Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels – Belgium
(Berlaymont building, meeting room Walter Hallstein)*

1. Welcome

Alain Quinet (AQ, SNCF Réseau) and Elisabeth Werner (EW, DG MOVE), PRIME co-chairs, welcomed the participants and in particular the new member:

- HŽ INFRASTRUKTURA from Croatia

Slovenian IM, SŽ Infrastruktura, is in the process of joining. This means that by the end of the year all main IMs are Prime members – as foreseen in the 4th railway package.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without comments.

3. Approval of the summary of the 12th meeting

The summary of the 12th meeting was approved with minor amendments previously received to the list of participants.

4. Shaping the future cooperation in PRIME and 2019 Work Plan

4.1. Strategic discussion I: Human Resources Policy of IMs

- Emerging shift in skills and competences
- Recruitment Policy: how to make rail more attractive?
- Training

AQ moderated the panel discussion, which included Pier Eringa (ProRail), Nico van Wijk (Infrabel), Hans Celander (Trafikverket) and Paul Case (Young Rail Professional Association).

1/Recruitment

The first round of discussion focused on recruitment: what are the barriers and solutions to attract and retain a young, skilful and diverse workforce into the rail industry?

Paul Case gave an overview of the UK situation, including the negative image of rail, lack of age and gender diversity, and the need for new skills. Young Rail Professional (YRP), consisting of voluntary ambassadors of the industry, has done ‘open-doors’ campaigns reaching out to families, schools and students to project the image of the rail industry. They have also organised study tours abroad for current professionals. Hans Celandier (Trafikverket) raised a point of better communication: young people have insufficient understanding of the rail industry (such as its role in digitalisation and decarbonisation), and reaching them needs to be done via channels such as social media and LinkedIn. According to Pier Eringa, ProRail has difficulties especially in attracting track workers because the work consists of night shifts, weekends and holidays. In addition, IMs compete for workforce with RUs, which pay better, and young professionals often do not make the difference between IMs and RUs.

2/Training

The second round focused particularly on training and an emerging shift in skills and competences.

Nico van Wijk shared Infrabel’s modernised training approach, including digitalised, modular, short and accessible learning platforms. In addition, they are building a centralised learning centre in Brussels, in which simulations and other physical training can supplement digital learning. Flattening the organisation and improving accessibility of the management are other elements of the reform.

Reactions from other members of PRIME highlighted and brought up other issues, including:

- PRIME members are encouraged to get more engaged via CER and EIM in the established Social Dialogue between rail associations and trade unions;
- Young people appreciate learning and development possibilities, mobility and international experience. Some members (Trafikverket and ADIF) are already initiating work exchanges and YRP does study tours abroad. The rail industry should have progressive internal mobility plans as well as an attractive career path for inter-industry career mobility; DB Netz is promoting mobility; Pier Eringa considered ideal if staff start with railways, then gain experience in other sectors and come back to railways.
- The lack of gender diversity and high average age of employees are alarming and hamper rail industry’s attractiveness and innovativeness.

EW presented background information on gender and age structure in IMs across member states, and called on PRIME members to endorse Women in Transport – EU Platform for change, which will have its first year anniversary on 27th November 2018.

AQ concluded that interested PRIME members should take up the IM’s proposal on exchange program, and should contribute to the Railway’s Sectoral Social Dialogue. He called on PRIME members to support Women in Transport.

4.2. Strategic discussion II: Commercial strategies of IMs

- Offering attractive services to new and existing customers
- Developing new services – MaaS, consulting, engineering, ...
- Promoting – marketing, communication, reaching out and managing customer relations

EW moderated the panel discussion, which included Erik Laidvee (Estonian Railways), Isabelle Delon (SNCF Réseau), Francesca Ciuffini (Rete Ferroviaria Italiana) and Paul Hegge (Lineas).

1/Evolution of sales and income

The first issue discussed was: how diversified is the income of your organisation? How have the 'sales' evolved in recent years and what were the underlying reasons, e.g. change in traffic volumes, industry structure or charging principles? What is the impact of your Government's funding model on the commercial strategy of your organisation?

Erik Laidvee (Estonian Railways) provided insights into turning around the decline in both passenger and freight volumes in Estonia. In terms of freight, the IM cooperates and exchanges data with various partners, including ports, cross-border partners and customers, to ensure better services; sales are done on a common project basis. In terms of passenger traffic, improved speed, comfort and punctuality have brought growth in volumes. More competition would benefit IMs.

2/New customers and service models

The second issue discussed was: is your organisation proactively looking for new customers and service models? If so, how? Are you analysing market needs? Have you set up partnerships to offer a broader range of services?

Francesca Ciuffini (RFI) focused on open access passenger market in Italy. It is important to conduct market surveys not only about direct customers (RUs) but also about the final customers (travellers and shippers). Timetables and accessibility of stations are the key factors for those who do not use railways often, while punctuality and quality is most important to frequent users. She highlighted the role of stations as nodes of multi- and inter-modality and hence critical spaces for providing mobility as a service (MaaS).

Isabelle Delon (SNCF Réseau) focused on PSOs and the "new era" of open railways in France, highlighting their approach of putting regional authorities as customers at the centre and shifting the mind-set of the IM to system operator. This means that SNCF Réseau provides a range of new services to the regional authorities, such as data services, training and consulting, in addition to having key account managers. SNCF Réseau sees market opening and environmental transition as an opportunity, and cooperation between IMs on the new line connecting London to Bordeaux an opportunity to develop traffic and revenues.

3/Rail freight

The third issue discussed was: from the operator's perspective, what are the 3 issues, in the order of priority, which need to be tackled by the rail IMs in order for rail freight to gain modal share?

Paul Hegge (Lineas) provided the freight perspective on the issue. Maximising passengers and freight on rail should be at the top of the IMs mission statement. Rail freight needs to gain market share by improving the service offer ('better product') and focussing on customer needs. Trucks set the standard of flexible, fast and reliable logistics and rail must fulfil the same expectations. There should be more intermodal terminals to enable offering "goods as a service" (GaaS, the

freight equivalent of MaaS). Lobbying is required to achieve a level playing field. ERTMS is an opportunity to improve rail service but only if we can reduce the costs of the system and find a funding solution. RUs will pay more for infrastructure use if they get superior service.

4/Implementation of new solutions

The floor was opened for the fourth group of questions, asking: what is the possible timeframe to develop and implement these solutions? What are the main obstacles?

Members see cooperation with other IMs, operators and authorities as essential. For sustainable mobility it is also important to collaborate with public planners, smart cities and other modes. There is still a challenge of financing infrastructure at the same time as creating demand for rail services. Opening markets will give a new impetus to the business of IMs.

EW concluded that offering new services while getting sufficient financing for infrastructure requires cooperation with regions, customers and other partners. It is important to know the direct and the final customers, and IMs should become system operators in the complex web of multi-modality. EU will continue support for modernisation and ERTMS. EW brought to attention a study of internalisation of external costs in transport to be presented to stakeholders for the first time on 17th Dec 2018. She suggested that commercial strategies should be included in the future work of the PRIME sub-groups.

4.3. Work in PRIME subgroups

AQ noted a useful meeting of co-chairs and industry advisory board with subgroup chairs on 12 October. The intention was to have such a meeting each year. He invited new members to participate in subgroups, in particular in the KPI and Benchmarking subgroup.

Sub-group chairs presented the results of their sub-groups and the proposals for topics in 2019.

Digitalisation (Justus Hartkamp, ProRail)	Safety Culture (Justus Hartkamp, ProRail)	Charges (Sian Prout, MOVE)	Financing (Paul Mazatoud SNCF Réseau)	Implementing Acts (Stefano Castro, RFI)	KPIs and benchmarking (Rui Coutinho, Infraestructuras de Portugal)
Ongoing work					
Sharing best practices	Exchange of best practices	Exchange of practice on application of	Discussions on EFSI and CEF	Providing expertise for initiatives under preparation	Benchmarking report published
Database of digital projects	After the success of the first Twinning programme, a new programme has been proposed in cooperation with ERA	directs costs and markups	Maintenance benchmark	Regulation on economic equilibrium test	Data collection and preparation of reports with support of external consultant
Big data and business intelligence		Coordination of cancellation charges	Sustainable finance		
Cyber security					Improvement of data quality and availability
Open data standards					

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Proposals for 2019					
A call to contribute to the common database Data management and open data standards	Exchange of practice on safety culture Level crossing and track workers safety	Charges related obstacles to international traffic A common approach for cancellation charges in case of force majeure (in cooperation with RNE)	Preparing input for the EC expert group on sustainability criteria for rail projects IM Funding mechanisms in cooperation with PRIME KPI Sub-group	The group remains in stand-by Revision of the Rail Freight Corridor Regulation	Exchange of views on benchmarking and promotion of the report Second benchmarking report (Jan) Thematic report on Punctuality (Apr) Launch of thematic report on IM Funding Mechanisms

EW suggested that a second benchmarking report from the KPI subgroup should have wider outreach. When the draft 2017 Benchmarking Report is ready (planned January 2019, after initial check of the KPI subgroup), it will be circulated to the members with the proposed schedule for publications

AQ concluded that the draft proposal for working plan for next year will be prepared based on the discussions above and members' contributions (2 weeks deadline). The draft will be circulated for approval in December.

4.4. Cooperation with Railway Undertakings Dialogue and other cooperation forums

EW launched the discussion on behalf of subgroup chairs about arranging cooperation with other platforms around concrete topics, as had been done very successfully this year for developing the Contingency Handbook. A topic already proposed for cooperating with the RU Dialogue concerns discussion on route compatibility, for which EC will arrange PRIME/RUD meeting on 19 December 2018. Potential topics for PRIME/RBs will be discussed during the European Network of Rail Regulatory Bodies (ENRRB) meeting at the end of November 2018 and PRIME members are invited to provide feedback on other topics in need of joint discussion. There is already a specific RB/PRIME sub group meeting on Charging foreseen in February in Vienna. AQ invited members to express interest to become coordinators of future cooperation with (a) RU Dialogue and (b) ENRRB.

5. New members

EW welcomed Croatian railways HŽ INFRASTRUKTURA as the new member. Marko Zdravko Zubrinic presented the company.

6. Update on MFF and military mobility

EW presented an update on the EU's next long term budget. Discussions on the CEF proposal are progressing well in both the Council and the Parliament. Military mobility, introduced by EW, followed with a more detailed presentation by Aurimas Brazys (DG MOVE). The next steps of the Action Plan are: 1) definition of military requirements (November 2018); 2) assessment of gaps between civilian infrastructure and military requirements (by January 2019); 3) definition of the dual-use requirements (by 2019); 4) launch dual-use CEF calls (2021); and 5) possible adaptation of the TEN-T framework (2023). With respect to the above steps, Mr Brazys confirmed that transport infrastructure stakeholders will be consulted by DG MOVE in 2019 on defining dual use requirements.

7. Information points

7.1. European Rail Facilities Portal

Annika Kroon (MOVE) presented the purpose and update of the project. The first operational version of the Common Rail Facility Portal is due in June 2019. A consortium is working on different options for the business model of the portal to ensure self-sustainability after the development stage of the project. DG MOVE is highly in favour of a Common Rail Facility Portal and calls upon PRIME members for support, including sharing of data, and feedback on the business model development. Participants welcomed the aim of a common portal but indicated that there are still concerns regarding costs, user friendliness of the project, as well as duplication and compatibility with national systems, which are compliant with the Regulation on Service Facilities.

7.2. 4th Railway Package preparedness

Keir Fitch (MOVE) gave an overview on implementation of the technical pillar of the 4th railway package. The main identified risks in the transition period are: 1) lack of predictability of ERA's workload; 2) lack of fees and charges revenues to cover the associated costs of staff and IT tools; 3) shortages of staff with appropriate expertise; and 4) the dependency on a timely transposition and cooperation agreements between ERA and each national safety agency. Albeit the prevailing risks, some progress has already been made within ERA, most notably: new governance structure, development of an IT tool, and the implementation of internal procedures. In addition, DG MOVE has established a regular dialogue with ERA to coordinate and prioritise the final steps and with Member States on transposition within RISC committees.

7.3. Language programme/pilots and Train Drivers Directive Annex VI amendment

AQ introduced the topic and passed the floor to EW, who presents Train Driver Directive Annex VI amendments. DG MOVE has proposed an amendment to the legislation in order to allow pilots, in which alternative options ensuring an equivalent safety level with the current language requirements while providing more flexibility, are to be explored, and called on IMs to start to develop tests of different options as soon as possible. Subsequently, Joaquim Kroll (RNE) and Giancarlo De Marco Telese (UIC) presented the language programme. At the first stages, the programme will focus on IM-RU operational communication (including predefined messages, translation tools, and ergonomics) and IM-IM communication at a national level (including definition of training level and the railway terminology list). RNE has encouraged RUs to be part of the Language Program and IMs to launch pilots based on the results of the Language Programme, preferably spread out in Europe.

7.4. TTR pilots

AQ introduced the topic of ‘Redesign of the international Timetabling Process’ (TTR), which is a sector-driven project with involvement of both IMs and RUs. The aim of TTR at this stage is to test new elements and processes in “real-world” operational conditions and on the basis of results, in order to identify whether there is a need to change EU legislation. Nico van Wijk (Infrabel) presented the Antwerp-Rotterdam pilot, which appears to be more complex than expected but which is still on schedule.

8. Date and venue of next meeting

Next PRIME Plenary meeting will take place on 13 June (part of PRIME/HLIM SBB event package 12-14th June 2019), Bern, Switzerland.

9. Any other business

No other business.

Annex – List of participants

MEMBERS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ADIF

AS "LATRAILNET"

BANENOR

BLS

CFL

DB NETZ AG

EVR

FTA

GYSEV

HS1

HŽ INFRASTRUKTURA

INFRABEL

INFRAESTRUTURAS PORT.

IRISH RAIL

LISEA

LITHUANIAN RAILWAYS

MÁV

NETWORKRAIL

PKP PLK

PRORAIL

RFI

SBB CFF FFS

SNCF RÉSEAU

Techn. Regul. Authority Estonia

TRAFIVERKET

TRASSE SCHWEIZ

SZDC

OBSERVERS

CER

EIM

ERA

RNE

VISITORS FOR PANELS AND PRESENTATIONS:

LINEAS

UIC

YOUNG RAIL PROFESSION.