

**Statement of IRG-Rail for TEN-T day 21 June**

1. Rail freight corridors play an important role in promoting and improving rail freight in Europe. They can bring benefits for freight customers and train operators by facilitating cross-border rail transport, and for society at large by encouraging a modal shift of freight to rail.
2. IRG-Rail welcomes the initiatives by the ministries and the rail sector to strengthen the cooperation on the development of corridors and supports the "ROTTERDAM DECLARATION Rail Freight Corridors to boost international rail freight" and the other the corridor sector statement "Boosting international rail freight". IRG-Rail agrees with the objectives and issues of importance identified in these documents i.e. make international rail freight a more attractive option; enhancing operational efficiency; and ensure adequate capacity for all users.
3. However, the significant role of regulatory bodies in ensuring non-discriminatory access to the corridor in line with Article 20, paragraph 1 of Regulation (EC) No 913/2010, as well as fair treatment for all train operators and applicants seeking access to the corridors, should be acknowledged and further enhanced. For this purpose, in the statement below, IRG-Rail regulatory bodies confirm their commitment to further cooperate on corridors to promote a level playing field and fair competition.
4. IRG-Rail acknowledges a number of positive developments in the corridors within the framework of the Rail Freight Corridor Regulation, such as the establishment of a Corridor One Stop Shop (C-OSS) as a single point of contact for all users of the freight corridor, the definition of a clear framework for governance of the executive and the management boards, as well as the improved cooperation between infrastructure managers and railways operators, with a common approach to information provision.
5. During their work and monitoring activities so far, IRG-Rail has identified a number of areas of specific interest which should ensure constant improvement of corridors' operation as some barriers are remaining. These areas include:
  - more market-oriented capacity offer to meet the expectations of stakeholders and the sector which should work together to develop capacity offers that fulfill the needs of the market ;
  - better and more transparent coordination of works between infrastructure managers with consultation of the customers, if necessary by adapting the legal and/or contractual frameworks;
  - better coordination between pre-arranged paths and capacity in terminals to achieve aligned offers that meet the demands of customers and seamless freight transport from origin to destination;
  - better cooperation between infrastructure managers, in order to minimize the impact of

- disruptions on corridor traffic and to develop transparent rules for handling disruptions;
  - strengthening of the influence of both the railway advisory group (RAG) and the terminal advisory group (TAG) to ensure that views are appropriately taken into account in the management of corridors and, in particular, in the management boards' decisions on services, investment and management of infrastructure, and
  - better consideration of the interests of freight customers in the advisory process.
6. In consideration of the above, IRG-Rail members plan to strengthen their cooperation with regards to monitoring freight corridors. Our principal task is to ensure non-discriminatory access. We will monitor all corridors and seek assurance that corridors are promoting and striving to meet customer demand. We therefore intend to:
- develop guidelines to ensure a consistent approach to monitoring of corridors (capacity allocation, traffic management, coordination of works, terminal access, etc.), based on IRG-Rail's existing monitoring guidelines;
  - develop a common cooperation agreement for all corridor issues, in order to ensure that rules of procedure for decision-making on corridors are aligned;
  - participate actively in the development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs);
  - continue to use the IRG-Rail access working group to follow the development and performance of all corridors, ensuring return of experience and, where appropriate, supporting the development and refining of best practice;
  - organise an annual forum of IRG-Rail members to review monitoring approaches to rail freight corridors;
  - further engage with all relevant stakeholders on the corridors; and
  - report on IRG-Rail monitoring activities on a yearly basis.

21 June 2016