

**Press Release
Brussels, 10 June 2009**

Railways call on EU ministers to avoid the mistakes of the past

In the run up to a meeting of European transport ministers in Brussels on 11 June, Europe's independent rail infrastructure managers are calling for the development of the European rail freight network to be based on the needs of the market, rather than political horse trading between Member States.

At the meeting, ministers will discuss proposals by the European Commission to create a competitive rail freight network, based on the creation of trans-European corridors on which priority would be granted to certain types of freight traffic.

Michael Robson, Secretary General of the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM), calls on Ministers when debating the proposed new Freight Regulation, to avoid the pitfalls that have hampered the effective development of the Trans-European Transport (TEN-T) network in the past, saying *"the industry is expecting a market-orientated and flexible corridor definition, not a list of corridors based on mere political decisions."*

Making rail freight more attractive is a vital part of the strategy to meet the EU's environmental targets and to reduce congestion on Europe's crowded roads. Infrastructure managers should be allowed the flexibility to take decisions that focus on the reduction of delays to priority freight trains while trying to minimize overall delays on the network. Including complicated loopholes for passenger traffic could put the strategy to improve the quality of rail freight at risk.

In many European countries, non-railway companies (such as ports, manufacturers or logistics companies) can apply to book capacity on the network. EIM, along with the European Parliament, calls on transport ministers to ensure that these "authorised applicants" will be able to also book capacity along trans-European rail corridors.

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Notes to editors:

On 11 December 2008, the European Commission proposed a regulation concerning a European rail network for competitive freight. This initiative is aimed at improving the quality of international rail freight transport in Europe. The Commission proposes the creation of trans-European corridors on which priority, both in path allocation and traffic management, would be granted to certain types of freight traffic. EIM supports the proposal, as long as it results in a flexible, market oriented structure. More information is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/freightreg>

For further information, please contact:

Patrick Keating
EIM Public Affairs Manager
phone +32 2 234 37 70
mobile +32 476 66 19 09
e-mail patrick.keating@eimrail.org
twitter: twitter.com/EIM_rail

EIM, the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, was established to promote the interests and views of the independent infrastructure managers in Europe, following liberalisation of the railway market. It is a lobbying organisation which also provides technical expertise to the appropriate European bodies. To find out more about EIM, visit www.eimrail.org or follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/EIM_rail

