



Press Release 18.10.07

European Rail Freight-Oriented Network the future for Rail Freight!

The EC Communication on a European Rail Freight-Oriented Network issued today is a major step forward for rail freight. It commits to creating better conditions for shifting freight from road onto rail in the coming years. The European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM) have for several years advocated the implementation of simple and practical methods to achieve growth in rail freight. The framework for this is now in place.

The aim of the EC Communication is to promote the creation of a strong European rail network that will offer a better quality of service in freight transport than today in terms of journey times, reliability and capacity.

EIM has strongly promoted for example the harmonisation of train length, axle loads, speed and loading gauge throughout European corridors. The EC communication today, takes these simple, but effective measures proposed by the EIM in its position paper on Freight Oriented Networks into account.

The EC also recognises that with expected increases in freight transport of over 40% from now until 2020, rail infrastructure investments on key corridors are needed. Coupled with the EC's Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan that looks at the issue of resolving bottlenecks in the European transport system, there is now a real impetus to ensure that the Trans-European Rail Network will be ready to handle future growth. Regrettably, there are no new financing methods available to deal with this growth.

In particular, EIM notes that terminals and marshalling yards are listed in this action plan as "strategic locations" needing "adequate transshipment facilities". Hence the need to ensure an open and non-discriminatory access to marshalling yards, wherever they may be located, is essential.

EIM Secretary General, Michael Robson stated that *"EIM believes that great attention now needs to be paid to the details of this communication for it to be successful in delivering its very ambitious outline of objectives. This would include, in particular greater focus on competition and fair access to the infrastructure. The EC also needs, in terms of the overall Logistics Action Plan and the Rail Freight-Oriented Networks, to ensure that there are adequate resources and trained staff available in order to achieve the very extensive list of objectives set."*

Only two days ago the CEOs from the European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM) met with members of the European Commission (EC) to discuss priorities for the rail sector. The EIM CEOs confirmed to the EC's Mr. Grillo-Pasquarelli, Director for Inland Transport (DG Tren), that Members of EIM are willing to participate in a foreseen sector group to establish further action plans and work to achieve further efficiencies in the European rail sector.



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Notes to the Editor:

For further information on EIM:

<http://www.eimrail.org>

For new photography related to this press release:

<http://www.eimrail.org/events.html>

For photography related to EIM people:

<http://www.eimrail.org/people.html>

For information related to EIM's position on Freight Oriented Networks

http://www.eimrail.org/documents/FreightOrientedNetwork_EIMPositionPaper_April07.pdf

For information related to EIM's position on Logistics Action Plan

http://www.eimrail.org/documents/EIM_amendments_Ayala_report_7_June.pdf

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