

Press Release 07.03.07

European Rail
Infrastructure Managers



The journey to the future is a European railway system open to all

Along with its partner organisations ERFA, ERFCP & UIRR, EIM focused on adding value to the ongoing debate on the development of the railway industry, during its 4th conference “Improving Rail Freight Logistics,” 07.03.2007.

EIM, the European Rail Infrastructure Managers was established five years ago this month to promote the interests and views of the independent infrastructure managers in Europe, following liberalisation of the railway market.

State Secretary Jörg Hennerkes (Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs) opened the conference with the Presidency’s visions for the future. “The subject of this Conference, the improvement of logistics in rail freight transport, is of great importance for the Federal Government and also for us as the current presidency of the Council in the field of transport. It is our opinion that the fields of transport and logistics are of decisive importance when it comes to stabilising the competitiveness of the European Union and of its individual Member States and to extending and ensuring it for the future.”

As the European Parliament again discussed sustainable mobility in its sessions (26-28.02.07), and highlighted that it was not satisfied with the “progress of European transport policy, especially with the implementation and financing¹” the conference speakers focused on improving freight logistics through operational measures like access to services and full and fair implementation of the first railway package. It was also highlighted that the railway industry needs to make progress in reducing costs of infrastructure maintenance and renewals so that costs to the users also go down!

UIRR’s Director General, Rudy Colle, underlined the slow progress in the actual ‘liberalised’-rail operations, in particular in the area of combined transport, which is the proven growth market for rail freight, and expects a more responsible approach of all concerned instead of a defensive one.

One session of the conference was dedicated to the issue of funding. EIM’s second brochure “Finding the Funds” was distributed to the railway community at large. It provides examples of existing funding opportunities and their uses.

EIM Secretary General, Michael Robson said, “The European Union will make about 90bn Euros available for all transport infrastructures over the coming six years. EIM hopes that the major work it has done and published today will help railways to get a fair share of these funds. We also hope that it will create incentives for setting up the right partnerships to attract other public as well as private funding.”

The EIM, ERFCP, ERFA, UIRR Conference was attended by over 120 participants from more than 20 European nations.

¹ Draft report on Keep Europe moving – Sustainable mobility for our continent (2006/2227(INI))

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Mr. Ruete, Director General for Directorate Energy and Transport closed the 2007 conference stating that "The European Commission strongly believes that the conditions are finally set at EU level for freight transport by rail to regain its competitive position in the multi-modal market for transport services. Further initiatives by the EC will try to foster this development: a) the enforcement of effective market opening and fair competition, b) the facilitation of competitive and seamless international services through legislative actions and other support actions, for instance for the deployment of the European signaling system ERTMS/ETCS and a European electronic data exchange system, c) promoting the development of a European rail freight oriented network and d) stepping up EU funding of investment in infrastructure. A key driver of this renaissance of rail freight will be the efficient integration of rail transport in the European and global logistic chain."

Notes to the Editor:

For further information on EIM:

http://www.eimrail.org/template_page.asp?pag_id=16

For an online copy of the press release:

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

For pictures of the event:

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

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