

## **ELETA conference 5 November 2019**

Publication version

Speaking points Hinne Groot

Dear Ladies and gentlemen, dear Maurizio Castelletti from the European Commission, dear Josef Doppelbauer from the EU Agency for Railways, dear Ad Toet Coordinator of the ELETA project,

Let me start with thanking you for having the opportunity to speak today on the importance of developing international rail freight. International rail freight is a key element in transport policy, in particular in view of climate change, and must be addressed at European level. We all know that rail still is very much nationally organized and financed, while for international rail freight many bottlenecks exist.

The Dutch government believes in rail freight. We encourage the companies who are present in the room today to develop their business in The Netherlands. We are doing our best to support you. So we have shown and you have witnessed today. And please contact me or my staff at the cocktail; I like to hear from you how we can promote rail freight.'

We are grateful for the support given by the Commission to rail freight in general and this particular project especially. Moreover we count on the continued efforts of EC, ERA and last but not least RailNetEurope, as association of the European Infrastructure Managers.'

Therefore NL took up rail freight in its 2016 EU presidency program. We developed together with all EU Member States

and the European Commission a Ministerial declaration addressing key topics under the 4 headings:

- Making rail freight attractive service for customers and citizens;
- More efficient governance;
- Enhancing operational efficiency;
- Ensuring adequate capacity for all users;

Crucial for the success of the Rotterdam declaration is that it is a Ministerial statement plus a statement with commitments from the entire railway sector. That was already a breakthrough in rail governance.

So the result was not only a political document but also a concerted effort by the sector itself. After the Rotterdam declaration the sector organizations joined forces in the Sector Statement Group and Member States work together in Network of Member States Executive Boards.

The SSG adopted 10 common priorities from the Sector Statement. It identified also rapporteurs and actors responsible for the implementation. This was a great step forward, also because it became the basis for good cooperation with Member States and EC.

In addition close cooperation was done with European Commission, ERA and EU institutions. This project ELETA is a great example of this

- Sector colleagues developed the tools for exchanging data and calculating ETA;
- Member States adopted a recommendation to promote exchanging of tracking and tracing and ETA data;
- European Commission adopted regulations to facilitate exchange of data and co-financed from CEF intermodal envelop the ELETA project.

The importance of ELETA is not the Silicon Valley type of breakthrough technology but its applications in practice. The practical results will help railway undertakings, terminals and operators to plan and operate the logistic chain in a better way. That makes rail freight more competitive.

What is very encouraging is that the ELETA project is supported by all actors and has become wider by attracting new players and services.

The reason NL supported the ELETA project from the beginning was also reflected in the national package of measures for rail freight that was adopted in 2017. This slide shows the expected benefits in terms of modal shift and CO2 reduction. This program is now fully underway; sector organizations take action, also in the field of digitalization. The Dutch government takes its part: i.a. it was decided to reduce track access charges by approximately 45% from 2018 onwards for a 5 years period to grasp the environmental benefits of rail freight. Digitalization is also part of the program, port of Rotterdam is active to facilitate data exchange between terminals, operators and railway undertakings. Benefits are already recognized and once connected to the European information systems this will create additional benefits for all stakeholders.

What is next now for ELETA? Most important is that tools developed will be used in practice and further disseminated.

But also digitalization tools must be broadened, uploading of logistic data by terminals and operators should follow the existing project. We need to know the planning, operation of all the train wagons in the logistic chain. In addition the goods on the train must be known, on this part more work is needed and this needs to be approached from intermodal perspective.

On this basis I am convinced quality that digitalization will contribute to the attractiveness of rail freight. This was also the perspective when Ministers of Rail Freight Corridor Rhine Alpine met 22<sup>nd</sup> May in Leipzig: Develop a Quality Charter.

Digitalization is not enough; it is only one element in the follow up of the Rotterdam declaration. More issues need to be tackled and this requires involvement of all stakeholders, railway undertakings, Member States, European Commission, ERA. Each stakeholder acting within its competence and taking responsibility. A voluntary high-level commitment, complemented by supportive regulatory and financial frameworks.

May I express our wish that the Rotterdam declaration will be followed up between sector, EU Member States and EC / ERA. This cooperation in the field of digitalization / ETA may serve as an example.

Back-up

One last issue before I conclude.

The legal framework for data sharing has been from the beginning on our mind. Is ETA data confidential? Can it be shared in the logistics chain? Member States have explored this first at national level. In the recommendation NexBO stated a contractual harmonized framework between infrastructure managers operated by RailNetEurope, railway undertakings and terminals was the best way to ensure a data exchange, that worked! Virtually all railway undertakings signed such contracts, but terminals are lagging behind. The project motivated the sector to make proposals on legislation at European level for making the data sharing mandatory. I refer to the revision of the TAF-TSI coordinated by ERA. I am sure that Mr Doppelbauer will explain further. Let me say already that I am very happy that the sector has made such great progress