

Tuesday, 26 May 2020

Closing the 2019 business year of Combined Transport: a difficult yet historic year

The year-on-year growth in European Combined Transport in tonne-kilometres matched the GDP growth of the European Union at 1,48% during 2019, while UIRR member CT Operators transported a historic record of 4,4 million consignments.

The Ordinary General Assembly of the association held last week – on 19 May – closed the business year. Two new members were elected to the Board of Directors: Andrea De Bernardi of Mercitalia Intermodal and Andreas Kraus of Kombiverkehr to replace Marco Goso and Rainer Mertel from the same companies.



Andrea De Bernardi



Andreas Kraus



Ralf-Charley Schultze

The final act of the day to be highlighted was a consultation between the CEOs of the UIRR General Assembly and DG MOVE Director General, Mr Henrik Hololei, and the Director for Land Transport, Ms Elisabeth Werner.



Henrik Hololei



Elisabeth Werner

The consultation focused on the following major topics:

- How to create a fair mode-neutral regulatory environment in European transport with a special view to horizontally structured legislation as opposed to applying policy principles such as *user-pays* or *polluter-pays* to otherwise mode-specific regulations;
- The criteria and conditions for extending state aid, or *temporary compensatory measures*, in order to ensure that these interventions into the Single Market by policymakers do not compromise competition, or unduly promote a technology, but fulfil the criteria of fair competition;
- European-level measures to enhance transparency and comparability of freight transport such as publishing a regular EU Report on Freight Transport, or the establishment of a European Portal for Transport Regulations – to showcase the regulatory framework of transportation in the various Member States on a single, comparable website; and
- The role of Combined Transport in the European Green Deal, in the fulfilment of the EU climate change objectives and in the post-pandemic economic recovery efforts, as well as in the European Year of Rail initiative for 2021.

Henrik Hololei and Elisabeth Werner and the members of UIRR mutually pledged their continued desire to collaborate over their shared objectives of making the European economy successful and competitive, while retaining the continent as one of the most pleasant and safe places to live for its citizens.

"The European Combined Transport sector has expressed its gratitude towards the practical and effective interventions of the European Commission in catalyzing the resolution of operational disturbances that arose during the initial phase of the pandemic-related lockdown measures introduced by the Member States." - added UIRR President Ralf-Charley Schultze.

Who is UIRR?

Founded in 1970, the International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport (UIRR) represents the interests of European road-rail Combined Transport Operators and Transhipment Terminal Managers.

Road-Rail Combined Transport (CT) is a system of freight forwarding which is based on efficiently and economically inserting electric rail into long-distance (road) transport-chains through the use of intermodal loading units (ILU).