

UIRR and IBS Announce Cooperation Talks

The **Interessengemeinschaft der Bahnspediteure** (IBS; Community of Interest of Railway Forwarding Agents)¹ and UIRR have announced their mutual intention to jointly explore the ways of promoting the advantages of Road-Rail Combined Transport, as well as rail freight in general on a European level. Details of this collaboration will be worked out in the coming months.

The General Assembly of UIRR, held on 15-16 May in Paris, decided on this collaboration besides closing the 2012 business year. European Road-Rail Combined Transport experienced a period of contraction during the past year resulting in a performance of 5% fewer tonne-kilometres and 11% less in consignments when comparing to 2011. This outcome may be attributed to

- the crisis-related drop in European economic activities and the resulting weak freight transport demand, and
- the loss of significant train path capacities on strategic transalpine routes due to multiple-week-long line closures attributable to reconstruction works: Brenner 3 months of which 6 weeks complete blocking, Simplon, as well as a 6-week landslide-related stoppage on the Gotthard line.

Long-haul Unaccompanied Combined Transport (UCT) – on relations longer than 300km – held up relatively well in 2012, while short-haul UCT and Accompanied Combined Transport (RoMo) suffered considerably, signified by the 4% tkm loss of UCT compared to the 19% drop in RoMo's tkm performance. The transport of semi-trailers in pocket-wagons reached a historic peak in history. CT also managed to retain its market share in the important segment of dangerous goods shipments.

Combined Transport Operators implemented several adjustments, which included changes in ownership as well as mergers in 2012:

- Following the absorption of Intercontainer Austria (ICA) by its parent company, Rail Cargo Austria (RCA), which is not a member of UIRR, Ökombi, Europe's largest RoMo operator, was also merged into RCA effective 1 January 2013.
- Hungarokombi, the RoMo operator in Hungary, has terminated its activities.
- Novatrans of France as well as Crokombi of Croatia both have been sold to new owners.
- Cemat of Italy has been merged with Italcontainer, its domestically focused sister-company, which mainly organised maritime hinterland traffic.

UIRR Members have been actively conducting enhancements to their operations and their service offering to maintain their competitiveness in these challenging times.

New members were elected to UIRR's Board of Directors: Alexandre Gallo (Novatrans) and René Dancet (RALpin) to join Chairman Robert Breuhahn, Vice-Chairman Peter Howald, Marco Gosso and Rok Svetek. The UIRR Report 2012-13² published on the same day has been integrated with the customary statistics booklet.



Robert Breuhahn

"The transformation of UIRR is progressing at a promising pace through the opening of the organisation to terminal managers and the recently announced collaboration talks with IBS. The European railway sector is changing and UIRR as an established rail freight customers' organisation will extend its role promoting a general shift to rail and favourable framework conditions for a more efficient railway system." – commented UIRR Chairman, Mr Robert Breuhahn, on the occasion.

Who is UIRR?

Founded in 1970, the **International Union of Combined Road-Rail Transport Companies** (UIRR) represents the interests of European Road-Rail Combined Transport Operators and Transshipment Terminal Managers. Road-Rail Combined Transport (CT) is a system of freight forwarding, which is based upon inserting economically and ecologically sustainable electric rail into long-distance (road) transport chains.

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¹ IBS, founded in 1996, has a mission to achieve "more traffic by railway". It presently comprises 14 active and 35 associated members from Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Poland, Sweden, Finland, Spain and Czech Republic <http://www.ibs-ev.com>

² See www.uirr.com