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Working Party on Rail Transport

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**THE ROLE OF THE RAILWAYS IN THE PROMOTION OF
COMBINED TRANSPORT**

**Implementation of Directive 2001/16/EC of the European Parliament
and of the Council on the interoperability of the trans-European
conventional rail system**

Transmitted by the European Community

INTRODUCTION

Directive 2001/16/EC on the interoperability of the conventional rail system adopted on 19 March 2001, like the Directive on the high-speed system, introduces Community procedures for the preparation and adoption of technical specifications for interoperability (TSIs), and common rules for assessing conformity with these specifications.

The Directive requires the adoption of a first group of priority TSIs within three years, i.e. in 2004, in the following areas: control/command and signalling; telematic applications for freight services; traffic operation and management (including staff qualifications for cross-border services); freight wagons; noise problems deriving from rolling stock and infrastructure.

PROGRESS OF WORK ON THE INTEROPERABILITY OF THE TRANS-EUROPEAN CONVENTIONAL RAIL SYSTEM

In 2001, the Commission obtained a favourable opinion from the regulatory Committee on the **first work programme** concerning the appointment of the European Association for Railway Interoperability (AEIF) as the **joint representative body**, and on **AEIF's mandate for the development of the first group of TSIs**.

On the basis of this mandate, AEIF has set up the structure and the working groups needed for the preparation of the draft TSIs; more than 240 experts from the Union and candidate countries are taking part in this important task.

A new tool was required to deal with this challenge: **the representative architecture of the conventional rail system**. The development of this tool began in 2001 with a very detailed functional analysis of the entire system. In 2002, a formal method was used to interpret this analysis, bringing out not only the various components and the links through which they are incorporated into the system, but also the conditions which must exist for each of these links. This tool is not only used by the groups which prepare draft TSIs to ensure the consistency and exhaustive nature of their specifications, but it will also be possible to use it as scientifically reliable proof of the safety of the specifications. The representative architecture was approved by the Commission following a positive opinion from the Committee at its meeting on 4 February 2003.

Another tool being developed is **the legislative reference system for the transitional period**, referred to in article 25 of Directive 2001/16/EC. This reference system will be useful for the period preceding the adoption of all the TSIs, which may prove to be relatively long depending on the difficulties encountered and the resources available, whether human or financial. Its construction takes into account the specifications already used in international traffic and the technical rules notified by the member States in the context of article 16, paragraph 3, and article 10, paragraph 5, of the Directive in question. At its meeting of 4 February 2003, the Committee indicated agreement for bringing this reference system into line with the first generation of APTU technical prescriptions which are being developed in the context of COTIF¹ of 9 May 1999.

The **cost-benefit analysis** tools for which the Directive provides were the subject of preparatory work in 2001-2002, both with reference to the methodology to be used and the files which must be created to describe infrastructures, rolling stock and traffic if the economic analysis is to be based on real and specific scenarios. These tools are ready to carry out the cost-benefit analysis for the first five TSIs, the first preliminary drafts of which are expected in July 2003.

¹ Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail.

The Directive also provides - and this is a new provision in relation to the high-speed Directive - for **consultation of the organizations representing the clients on the one hand and the social partners on the other**. In order to prepare for these consultations, a list of the organizations to be consulted has been drawn up along with a protocol of agreement between AEIF and the Sectoral Dialogue Committees established in the context of Commission Decision No. 98/500/EC. The social partners have been associated throughout the process with the relevant aspects: professional qualifications and conditions of safety and hygiene.

Where the first TSI mandate is concerned, the “**basic parameters**” stage is nearly complete. The basic parameters have been identified for each TSI and the corresponding technical or functional specifications have been developed. They will be proposed to the Committee at its next meeting scheduled for late June 2003, along with a first evaluation of the costs of implementation.

A **second mandate** was assigned to the AEIF in September 2002 for the following issues, currently regarded as having priority:

- Safety in railway tunnels;
- Air pollution;
- Accessibility for persons with mobility handicaps.

The adoption of this second group of TSIs is scheduled for 2005.

Another stage completed in 2002-2003 concerns **standardization**. It may be recalled that, according to the Directive, the TSIs determine the interoperability constituents and the interfaces which must be covered by European specifications, in particular **European standards** which already exist or which must be drawn up. In order to cover the latter, a mandate is required with the European standardization bodies (**CEN/CENELEC/ETSI**). At its meeting on 4 February 2003, the Committee indicated its agreement on an agenda for the development of these standards.

April 2003 was the deadline date for the **incorporation** into national law of Directive 2001/16/EC. Since a majority of member States have not notified national measures for implementation, the pertinent infringement procedures will be initiated.

FUTURE WORK

Where the first group of priority TSIs is concerned, the Commission intends to submit complete TSI drafts to the Committee at a meeting in October 2003, thus enabling a start to be made on consultations of associations of clients and social partners towards the end of 2003 and the TSIs to be successfully adopted in the spring of 2004.

The year 2004 will also be devoted to following up the development of the second mandate TSIs and to the follow-up of the revision of the “high-speed” TSIs drafted in the context of Directive 96/48/EC.

A harmonious transition must also be ensured in 2004 between the work of AEIF on developing the TSIs and the work of the European Railway Agency which will be established as from 2004 if the pertinent regulations are approved, as anticipated, early in that year.

An additional challenge consists in taking account of technical differences vis-à-vis the networks of candidate countries to the enlargement of the Union without waiting for their formal accession. Following the signature of the Treaty of Accession signed on 16 April 2003, the participation of the candidate countries in various committees as observers is progressively being arranged; in the case of the Committee on Interoperability, the meeting scheduled at the end of June 2003 will be the first occasion.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Railway policy and interoperability:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/rail/index_en.html

Work of the Committee on Interoperability:

<http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/tren/Home/main>

Work of AEIF:

<http://www.aeif.org/>
