

Editorial

RAILWAY HAS THE WIND IN ITS SAILS

« *AN EFFECTIVE SOLUTION TO CO₂ REDUCTION IS WITHOUT ANY DOUBT THE RAILWAY* »

This statement was pronounced during the Hague world conference from 13 to 24 November 2001. Ministers and diplomats from 180 countries were gathered to attempt to find ways of containing the worrying increase in greenhouse gas emissions which is seen as the main cause of climatic change.

In the brochure "Railways and climatic change" UIC compares the environmental impact of the different transport modes, highlighting the extensive benefits that rail offers when it comes to reducing greenhouses gas emissions. This study suggests to increase traffic volumes on rail, both in passenger transport (in particular in highly populated areas) and freight transport, thereby reducing it on the road.

During a conference held in May 2001, UIC, UNIFE, UITP and CER elaborated a common strategy for the next twenty years called « *Single European Railway System* ».

The main objectives are:

- Doubling the passenger traffic (passenger/km)
- Tripling freight traffic (tonne/km)
- Tripling productivity
- Elimination of avoidable fatal accidents
- A 50% gain in energy efficiency
- A 50% reduction in the generation of pollutants
- An increase in network capacity to accommodate traffic projections

In this context, the railways have every chance of winning back substantial market shares in the transport sector. To do so, everybody agrees to say that action must be taken to restructure railway activities. Railway companies must make further improvements in the matter of security, performance and commercial dynamism. All of these improvements, whether for passenger or freight traffic, go hand in hand with investments in infrastructure and equipment in order to reach the above mentioned objectives listed above.

Besides regulation and strategic aspects required to take up these challenges, it is important to underline that the success of this huge project will undoubtedly go through the input of one of the main actor of this sector, the specialized EFRTC Railway Trackworks Contractors, owner of an irreplaceable know-how and one of the main partners of the Infrastructure Manager.

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In the technical area, whether we are confronted to increase the network capacity or the speed, to ensure infrastructure maintenance or to handle modernization projects, a high level of quality and specialization are required. Thanks to a professional management, a qualified staff, refined and proven methodologies, and extensive and solid experience, the specialized EFRTC Trackworks Contractors are able to optimize the means and the resources for the success of the assigned works.

Some of the specialized EFRTC Contractors are independent companies; others are specialist divisions within large multi national companies. But they share strong technical knowledge of the requirement and capabilities of trackwork construction and maintenance.

Recently there have been signs that a number of companies with no such specialist railway expertise are trying to persuade Infrastructure Managers to allow them to undertake construction and maintenance trackwork. This would be against the interests of the Infrastructure Managers themselves. They need to keep, and to develop, direct links with the EFRTC's specialized trackworks Contractors who are able to provide:

- experienced partnership skills ;
- excellent management, productivity and organization on quality ;
- high technical capability ;
- qualified personnel for operating the machines and equipment for track construction and maintenance ;
- continuing technical innovation and improvements in quality and safety.

These capabilities are essential to the interests of the Infrastructure Managers; to maintain and strengthen those capabilities it is essential that the Infrastructure Managers continue to build direct relationships with the Contractors of the European Federation of Railway Trackworks Contractors.

Attilio Rossi, President EFRTC

THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF RAILWAY TRACKWORKS CONTRACTORS

EFRTC was founded in 1997. Membership consists of national federations or where these do not exist national co-ordinators, representing the majority of specialist trackworks contractors for countries that are member of the European Union (EU) or the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). National Federations and Co-ordinators from other countries may be admitted as associate members.

The EFRTC Board 2001-2002

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EFRTC NEWS

QUALIFICATION OF RAILWAY TRACKWORKS CONTRACTORS

The proposal for a new standard concerning qualification of railway trackworks contractors presented to the CEN by EFRTC was examined in the plenary meeting of the technical committee TC 256/SC1- Railway Applications - Track, on the 30th October 2001 in Lisbon. The proposal was approved by unanimity and the technical committee decided to constitute the working group WG34 in which experts of the Infrastructure Managers and delegates of EFRTC would participate.

Considering that the EFRTC submitted a draft of a standard of the qualification of the railway trackworks contractors, with its proposal, the time required for the elaboration of an EN should be shortened. Given that the association of procurement directions of the European railway companies, SKB, decided to harmonise the qualification codes under the utility directive for the qualification of trackworks contractors, it is expected that SKB will also contribute to the working group TC 256/SC1/WG34.



EFRTC WEBSITE

<http://www.efrtc.org>

Member News

THE QUALITY AWARD TRACKWORK

In the year 1997 the general meeting of the Überwachungsgemeinschaft Gleisbau e.V. (ÜGG)/ Trackwork Supervisory Association (TSA) decided to advertise a quality award for outstanding performance at railway trackwork. The evaluation of the propositions was made by an independent jury under the auspices of the president of the Eisenbahnbundesamt (EBA), Mr. Stuchly until 2000 and since 2001 under the auspices of Dr. Dieter Ludwig, the president of the VDV, Verband Deutscher Verkehrsunternehmen (association of German transportation companies).

Developments, plans and/or excellent exemplary executions for railway trackworks that are outstanding concerning the quality of similar performances can be nominated for the award. It is not only a prize for innovations but especially for already known procedures that are performed with very high quality throughout the area of railway trackwork.

An appliance is not depending on the membership of the ÜGG/ TSA. There are also no restrictions for the country of the home-base of the company and the country in which the work was done. Prerequisite is that the application is in German or a translation in German is attached.

The winner of the first quality award was the company Leonhard Weiss GmbH & Co. in Crailsheim for "Travelling Sheeting Works Equipment" with the so called "WARAN", first use at the route "Riesa-Elsterwerda". The WARAN is a new system, which offers essential advantages in the field of sheeting, as compared with traditional systems being provided with an integrated unit to improve/ stabilise the soil. It operates according to the sliding cutter principle. The system practically works free from vibrations

and can be operated therefore in direct neighbourhood with foundation and line systems. Soil with insufficient bearing capacity is treated within the whole length of the WARAN and reutilized at the end of the equipment in a stabilised and consolidated condition. For this purpose a specific, dosed aggregate is added, the type and quantity of which are determined in advance, and is mixed by means of the installed helical single-point threading and milling tool. The new earth material is deposited and consolidated in layers within the whole width of the sheeting area by means of a telescope shovel dredger with an incorporated plate-type consolidating unit.

In addition 1998 Mr. Sewcyk from the Institute for transport and communications and trackwork, University of Hannover, was honoured with a special price for his diploma thesis. The topic was "Influence of the weight of single wheels on the change of the position of railway-vehicles on the tracks". He surveyed the relevant influencing parameters and how the wear and tear of the single elements of tracks can be described with regard to the future of the maintenance for a track.

The quality price in 1999 was given to two companies.

On the one side the company Schreck-Mieves GmbH, Ruedersdorf got the price for "Supply and installation of concrete prefabricated products for trackwork (tram-tracks)". This system rationalised the production and installation of fixed tracks and grass-tracks for trams. The track for trams with these products is build with straight and curved ready-made pieces made of concrete. Because of the frame-effect these products have a very high, experimentally proven, security against strain because of shocks. They can be produced fitting to the profiles of the tracks, wide of the tracks, radius and transition- and frame-connections.

This system has advantages concerning the design of the cross-section and a much lower building-

height compared to the usual ones especially for the arrangement of tracks in the cities and for turning-slopes.

On the other side the company Thormaehlen Schweißtechnik GmbH was winner of the price for "process-chain for welding without a gap". For the first time a continuous quality-chain could be performed with clear definitions of responsibility. The process follows this way: The rolled track with a length of 120m is brought directly by the welding-work to the construction-area. The reloading is done by licensed reloading-facilities and guarded by a therefor responsible person. The track-worker gets a document of proofed quality of the railway-track for further construction. After the finish of the railway-track the track will be handed over to the further owner and the evidence of quality will be documented again. The process "building of a track without gap" including the record is done by the system-supplier. This warranty-chain of the railway-track is without a gap at any time. The whole system-supplier has the responsibility .

The winner of the quality-price 2000 were the companies Hering Bau Gleis- und Ingenieurbau GmbH, Burbach and Frenzel-Bau GmbH, Bauunternehmen, Freden for "System-platforms". It is a complete solution for platforms whose parts are produced with steel-concrete and have a very high quality of the surface. The elements made of steel-concrete build a sort of "bridge-construction". The advantage of these already produced single pieces is a much higher economic value, that means this system can save costs compared to convenient solutions. The foundation is simple. It is possible to do without securing the pit and the pillars in the ditch can be used in a smaller size. All cables can be laid under the platform and be brought over the surface at any point.

In 2001 the company Krebs GmbH & Co.KG, Bad Muenster a.St.-Ebg. was the winner. They received the price for "EM-Sat with GPS-Connection". This System is a combination of two already existing technologies, the electrical measuring-vehicle with a satellite-wagon in the

front and the GPS-Technique (Global Positioning System). The honourable work of the company Krebs is the development of a complete concept out of two existing systems. In future this system can be used for track-maintenance because of the data from the measuring-technique.

The problem that had to be solved was the inaccuracy of the GPS. For this reason it is not common to be used at trackwork. EM-Sat gives exact data. To define the place of a track exactly, so called fix-points have to be used which can be changed and whose definition with the help of a measuring-company slows the work-speed of mechanical Systems down. The use of the GPS can replace these fix-points. Because of this combination a high potential of improvement and cost-saving exists.

Now the ÜGG/ TSA looks forward to innovative propositions for the award 2002.

TRACTION PROBLEMS IN CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF RAILWAY LINES: THE SPANISH CASE

The maintenance work on railway lines have always required certain traction resources (locomotives) that have traditionally been supplied by the Railway Administrations.

With the growth in the sector due to the construction of new railway lines, the need for these traction resources has grown equally.

This has been causing the contracting of freight and operations to private enterprises. A good example is the Madrid-Barcelona-French border high speed railway line project. In this case the Railway Administration announced a tender and contracted enterprises such as Continental and TC Transport (company participating with COMSA and TECSA, Spain). A total of twenty four locomotives with drivers and maintenance staff have been placed on sites for the laying of the first 310 km of line (the Madrid-Zaragoza section).

EU News

NEW EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE RAIL INDUSTRY INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGERS

A new trade association was launched in Brussels, on 11 December, to represent the particular interests of the rail infrastructure management sector in relation to EU legislative developments affecting the rail industry.

The founding members of the Association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM) are Banverket (BV-Sweden), Banestyrelsen (BS-Denmark), Jernbaneverket (JBV-Norway), Ratahallintokeskus (RHK-Finland), Railtrack (in administration) (UK), Rede Ferroviária Nacional (REFER-Portugal) and Réseau Ferré de France (RFF-France). The new body will welcome other members who fulfil the requirements of infrastructure managers as defined by EU legislation.

EIM spokesman BO BYLUND, Banverket, said: "We are delighted to embark on creating this new organisation which will work hard to represent the interests of infrastructure managers in the development of European legislation. With the emergence of a less integrated railway industry, it makes sense for us to concentrate our time and resources on areas affecting the contribution that infrastructure can make to the development of the railways. We do recognise the critical importance of having good working relationships with Railway Undertakings and will cooperate positively with other railway bodies, particularly the Community of European Railways, to promote joint understandings that will help the railways to deliver improved services to their customers." The EIM's mission statement confirms the wish of members to contribute to the development of European transport policy based on sustainable mobility through efficient use of infrastructure.

Its members will work together to ensure that EU legislation sets out to:

- meet the needs of both existing and new train operating customers,
- enhance the efficient use of existing rail infrastructure,
- manage safety,
- ensure efficient, economic and appropriate implementation of the interoperability process,
- develop new infrastructure.

Bo Bylund said: “European railways have not fulfilled their full potential nor been able to fulfil all customer expectations. The EIM will contribute to addressing this problem, working with railway undertakings where appropriate to achieve the common objective of sustainable mobility throughout Europe.”

For further information, please contact Susanne Kuschel, EIM, 21, rue de la Tourelle at 1040 Brussels - Tel: 02 230 6391 or nordicinfra@easynet.be

EIM WELCOMES THE RAILWAY PACKAGE

The European Rail infrastructure Managers (EIM) welcome the Commission’s proposals. Since rail freight is currently under strong challenge in Europe the urgency to turn the trend is recognized by everyone in the sector. The infrastructure managers have a decisive role to play in facilitating the development of international rail freight and the establishment of a level playing field for all railway undertakings. The EIM members will engage themselves in practical co-operation to meet these objectives.

EIM recognize the critical importance to move towards a single European system with a common approach to safety and technical harmonization of the national networks. This is necessary to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of the rail mode. Slow process to date underlines the need for introducing new working methods to speed up the process towards an integrated rail network. EIM therefore welcome the proposal to create a European railway Agency to steer the process of harmonization, whilst at the same time, avoiding further unnecessary bureaucracy.

COMMISSION APPROVES STATE AID TO RAILTRACK

The European Commission has authorised under EU state aid rules the financial aid given by the UK Government to Railtrack Plc, the debt-ridden UK railway company which was put into receivership last October, on the grounds that the subsidy would ensure continuity in the supply of rail services in Great Britain. Under the Administration Order, Railtrack’s relevant rail activities are to be transferred to another company as a going concern, while the UK authorities can ensure that normal rail services can continue during the transfer. The total aid made available by the UK Government - in the shape of loans - comes to Euro 8.78 billion. After assessment, the Commission concluded that this aid is in line with guidelines on aid for rescuing and restructuring firms in difficulty.

It particularly noted that:

- the aid is necessary to ensure the continued provision of rail services;
- the money is made available on commercial terms
- notably from the point of view of interest rates
- during the Administration period and will subsequently be repaid to the Government.

The aid has been initially authorised for a period of six months starting on October 7, 2001. However, on the UK Government’s request and taking into consideration the exceptional circumstances in this case, the Commission has approved an extension of a further period of six months.



Infrastructure Investment

BANK LOANS EURO 320 MILLION IN 2001 FROM THE EIB FOR TRANSPORT

The European Investment Bank (EIB) lent Euro 320 million in South-Eastern Europe in 2001, according to a statement published on February 6. As in previous years, the bulk of the money, Euro 253 million, was used to modernise and repair basic infrastructure. Euro 30 million was invested in the electricity system of Albania, where frequent power cuts are seen by the European Commission as a source of political and social unrest. All the rest went towards repairing the region's transport networks. It included a Euro 80 million investment in the Bosnian and Croatian sections of the pan-European rail network, a grid of long-distance routes that is planned to span the entire continent.

A newer priority is support for the private sector and local authorities in the region. Commercial banks in Croatia and Macedonia, which are the first two countries to sign Stabilisation and Association Agreements with the EU, received global loans of Euro 46 million and Euro 20 million respectively. The aim of these loans is to strengthen the local banking sector and increase the availability of long-term investment capital in the local economies.

This is the first year that the EIB has lent to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which up to October 2000 was ruled by the autocratic Slobodan Milosevic. The country received Euro 66 million, of which Serbia got Euro 50 million and Montenegro, Euro 16 million. The biggest recipient was Croatia, which has the most developed economy in the region, with Euro 146 million. Albania got a total of Euro 47 million; Bosnia, Euro 40 million; and Macedonia, Euro 20 million.

The EIB says it will be the biggest source of infrastructure investment in the coming years, concentrating in the sectors of transport, energy and the environment. It has agreed a provisional list of about 30 projects with the European

Commission, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Council of Europe, costing an estimated Euro 2.4 billion. A third of the projects will be financed by the EIB. The Bank will be the lead financier in some eight projects and will co-finance five others.

EIB LENDS 85 MILLION EUR TO YUGOSLAVIA

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is advancing a EUR 85 million loan to ZTP Belgrade (EUR 70 million) and JPZ Montenegro (EUR 15 million), the railway companies of Serbia and Montenegro, for priority rehabilitation works on main railway lines between Belgrade, Podgorica and Bar. The project, which represents a landmark cooperation agreement between Serbia and Montenegro, also includes technical assistance and studies for the restructuring of the local railway sector.

The financing contract was signed in Belgrade on 19 March by EIB's Director of lending operations in the Mediterranean and in the Balkans, Antonello Pugliese, and Prof. Mirosljub Labus, Deputy Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The project concerns a programme for the rehabilitation of some 62,1 km of railway sections along Pan-European Corridor X, and some 79,3 km on the railway line Belgrade-Podgorica-Bar, including the refurbishment and upgrading of signalling and safety equipment, telecommunication and electrical systems, and the supply of equipment, spare parts and machines for track maintenance. Most of the financed works and supply of equipment will be completed by the end of 2003 in Serbia, and by the end of 2004 in Montenegro.

The EIB resumed its operations in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 2001, comprising lending activity for projects in Serbia and Montenegro.

EFRTC General Assembly

The EFRTC General Assembly, held in Rome on the 30th November 2001, approved the EFRTC annual report and the accounts 2001 and the budget for 2002. In order to reach the objectives of EFRTC, the General Assembly has taken the decision to promote the following new actions:

- Harmonisation of procurement procedure and trackworks price list.
- Outsourcing of all the track maintenance renewal and construction works
- Reducing national conditions concerning circulation and working of track construction and maintenance machines.
- Harmonisation of rail track quality and maintenance requirements.
- Turn key project for track maintenance.
- Project financing.

During the EFRTC General Assembly, the study groups had the opportunity to present the progress and results of their working groups.

The General Assembly was followed by the intervention of Mr. Mauro Moretti, chief executive officer of the RFI- Rete Ferroviaria Italiana. Mr. Mauro Moretti illustrated the main problems that the Infrastructure Managers are facing today and the actions that have to be taken to revitalise the railways. Rail transport is literally a strategic sector, on which the success of the efforts to shift the balance will depend particularly in the case of goods. It is not enough to realise the interoperability on high speed and conventional lines but, step by step a network of railway lines must be dedicated exclusively to goods services. Another important problem to solve is the technical harmonisation and interoperability between the systems of the EU railway Infrastructure Managers, eliminating national conditions and applying the EU Directives and CEN standards concerning railway applications.

Considering the above mentioned problems, Mr. Mauro Moretti considered it of great importance to have a close relation between RFI and the National Associations of Contractors in particular with the Federation of Railway Tracworks Contractors (EFRTC).

The General Assembly ended with the presentation of a new embedded rail system developed by our member Balfour Beatty rail project Ltd. and of a yard protection system developed by the company Sab Wabco.

Conferences & Seminars

June 4-6 2002 – Valencia, Spain
European Commission DG Research Surface Transport Conference



June 6-7 – Kent, UK
EFRTC General Meeting and visit to the channel Rail link

June 12-14, 2002 – Nantes, France
UITP Light Rail Conference

September 24-27, 2002 – Berlin, Germany
Innotrans Exhibition



October 22 2002 – Madrid Spain
UNIFE General Assembly

October 23-25, 2002 – Madrid, Spain
Eurailspeed 2002
4th World Congress on High Speed Rail



November, 26-28, 2002 – Barcelona, Spain
European Commission 2nd Conference on Energy and Transport (this year focus on Infrastructure Issues)

November 26-28, 2002
Railtex 2002 MackBrooks

April 2003
Rail-Tech Europe
Europoint