

PRESS RELEASE

9th December 2016

ProRail and EIM participated at the Rail Freight Day 2016, which took place on 9th December 2016 at the Palais Ferstel in Vienna (Austria).

For the third consecutive year, more than one hundred among delegates and stakeholders from the rail sector have come together to discuss challenges and opportunities for rail freight in Europe at the Rail Freight Day in Vienna.

In June 2016, at the TEN-T Days in Rotterdam, the Ministries of the 28 EU Member States commonly endorsed a "Declaration on Rail Freight Corridors" which was supported and complemented by an ambitious joint statement from the rail sector at large. Six months later, the Rail Freight Day has given the chance to take stock of what the rail sector has managed to achieve, which actions have been taken and how the way forward should be shaped.

EIM – the Association representing rail infrastructure managers in Europe – welcomes the outcome of the Event and the fruitful exchanges on how to make rail freight more attractive and customer-oriented, fully exploiting the potential of Rail Freight Corridors.

ProRail – the Dutch rail infrastructure manager and Member of EIM – joined the roundtable on ERTMS deployment. A coordinated pace of implementation among Member States, cooperation among infrastructure manager and the right balance between stability and innovation will be key to ensure a successful European ETCS deployment.

Several other strategic issues have been touched during the Event, from the operational efficiency through better information flows to timetable processes, from customers' needs and expectations to last-mile infrastructure.

Pier Eringa, President-Directeur of ProRail, said: *"ProRail strongly believes in transport as a crucial enabler of a competitive European economy with a strong internal market. Rail transport is well-placed to deliver on the dual challenge of performance and sustainability – especially in the light of the COP21 agreement. However, rail – and then especially rail freight – needs to become a more attractive and cost-effective option for all customers. In this regard, we confidently look at some of the EU initiatives to remove those technical and regulatory barriers in the rail sector: the Fourth Railway Package, Rail Freight Corridors, TEN-T and its funding or indeed ERTMS. If these initiatives are implemented in a smart way, rail will become more performant, dynamic, innovative and even safer than it already is"*.

Monika Heiming, EIM's Executive Director, said: *"EIM and its Members have proactively engaged themselves into the development of Rail Freight Corridors and their improvement in terms of quality, interoperability and capacity. We commit to continue doing so in order to help rail freight to become more customer-oriented, closer to market's needs and – finally – reach its maximum potential"*.



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ProRail is the rail infrastructure manager of the Netherlands, responsible for the construction, maintenance, management and security along the whole Dutch railway network.

Founded in 2005, today ProRail manages 7,021 kilometres of track, including 725 viaducts, 455 bridges, 15 tunnels and 404 train stations. Netherlands has the busiest rail network in Europe with an average of 1.1 million travellers per day.

EIM, the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, was established in 2002 to promote the interests and views of the independent infrastructure managers in Europe, following the liberalisation of the EU railway market. It also provides technical expertise to the appropriate European bodies such as the European Railway Agency. EIM's primary goal is promoting growth of rail traffic and the development of an open sustainable, efficient, customer orientated rail network in Europe.