

## *Public statement*

# EIM calls for a realistic and operational Military Mobility framework with clear safeguards for rail infrastructure

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## Executive summary

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The **European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM)** welcomes the activities of the European Commission (EC) to strengthen **military mobility** across the European Union and supports its objective of enabling fast, reliable and coordinated movements of military assets.

EIM considers that **rail infrastructure** will play a central role in delivering this objective. However, ensuring effective implementation requires that the regulatory framework fully reflects operational realities and provides the right conditions for infrastructure managers to deliver under both normal and crisis situations.

For EIM, the main challenges for military mobility are not purely technical, but primarily organisational and operational.

EIM stands ready to support the development of a European Military Mobility framework that is both ambitious and operationally deliverable.

## Main observations

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### 1. From ambition to operational delivery

**EIM's analysis** highlights concrete risks affecting the rail system in crisis scenarios, including large-scale system failures, cyber threats and capacity bottlenecks on key corridors.

To address these risks, **EIM calls** for a framework that prioritises:

- real-time cross-border coordination,
- operational preparedness,
- and the optimisation of existing infrastructure.

***Comment:** In the short term, improving coordination and procedures will deliver faster results than large-scale infrastructure expansion.*

### 2. Stronger coordination and clearer governance

**EIM supports** the establishment of EU-level coordination structures but stresses that:

- responsibilities must be clearly defined,
- coordination should be led by a single authority per operation or corridor,
- and existing cooperation mechanisms between infrastructure managers should be fully leveraged.

***Comment:** In particular, cross-border coordination must be capable of functioning in real time during crisis situations, which is currently not the case.*

### 3. Standardising exceptional transport procedures

A key obstacle to military mobility is the handling of non-standard (“exceptional”) trains, which currently require case-by-case approvals.

**EIM calls for:**

- the development of predefined transport solutions and routes,
- standardised categories for exceptional loads,
- and accelerated approval procedures based on prior assessments.

*Comment: This would significantly reduce delays and increase predictability in cross-border operations.*

### 4. Ensuring feasibility of emergency measures (EMERS)

EIM supports the introduction of a European emergency framework but stresses that implementation must remain realistic.

**EIM advocates:**

- very short deadlines for path allocation must be supported by prior planning and digital tools,
- large-scale prioritisation of military traffic must consider network-wide impacts,
- and emergency procedures must not compromise safety standards.

*Comment: Operational experience shows that preparation and pre-analysis are essential to make emergency timelines achievable.*

### 5. Safeguarding civilian transport and introducing compensation mechanisms

Military mobility measures, especially under emergency conditions, may lead to:

- reallocation of capacity,
- delays or cancellations of civilian services,
- and additional operational costs.

**EIM therefore calls for:**

- a mandatory and harmonised compensation framework for infrastructure managers,
- coverage of all costs, damages and lost revenues resulting from military priority measures,
- and legal clarity on liability, ensuring that operators are not held responsible for disruptions beyond their control.

*Comment: Such safeguards are essential to maintain the financial sustainability of the rail system and ensure its availability for military transport when needed.*

## 6. Funding aligned with responsibilities

The implementation of military mobility will generate new requirements for infrastructure managers.

**EIM calls for:**

- substantial EU funding for upgrading, maintaining and protecting dual-use infrastructure,
- dedicated support for digitalisation and cybersecurity,
- and rapid-access funding mechanisms to repair infrastructure affected by intensive or emergency use.

*Comment: Without adequate financial support, the level of ambition cannot be delivered in practice.*

## 7. Interoperability and regulatory alignment

**EIM stresses** the need to align:

- EU rail legislation,
- NATO requirements,
- and international frameworks.

**EIM requests** clear guidance on:

- the use of derogations in emergencies,
- the interaction with Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs),
- and the handling of sensitive or classified operational data.

*Comment: Current interoperability rules are largely designed for normal operations and do not sufficiently address crisis or emergency scenarios.*

## 8. Human resources and system readiness

Military mobility depends not only on infrastructure, but also on skilled personnel.

**EIM highlights:**

- shortages of authorised train drivers for cross-border operations,
- regulatory constraints on working time,
- and the need for specialised training for crisis situations.

*Comment: A comprehensive approach to readiness must include workforce planning, training and joint exercises.*

## 9. Digitalisation and cybersecurity

EIM supports the digitalisation of procedures and information exchange, including the use of interoperable platforms for military transport.

At the same time, **EIM recommends** that framework must ensure:

- robust cybersecurity standards,
- resilient communication systems,
- and adequate funding for IT upgrades required from infrastructure managers.

## 10. A balanced and operational framework

**EIM** stands ready to support the development of a European Military Mobility framework that is both ambitious and operationally deliverable.

Achieving this requires:

- realistic timelines,
- strong coordination mechanisms,
- adequate funding,
- and clear legal and financial safeguards.

*Comment: Only a balanced approach will ensure that rail infrastructure can effectively serve both civilian needs and Europe's defence objectives.*

For further information, please contact:

<p>EIM aisbl</p> <p>Monika Heiming Executive Director T.: +32 2 234 37 70 E.: <a href="mailto:monika.heiming@eimrail.org">monika.heiming@eimrail.org</a></p> <p>Michael Dierickx Chair Task Force Military Mobility <a href="mailto:michael.dierickx@infrabel.be">michael.dierickx@infrabel.be</a></p>	<p>EIM, the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, was established in 2002 to promote the interests of the infrastructure managers in Europe.</p> <p>EIM's primary goal is promoting growth of rail traffic and the development of an open sustainable, efficient, customer-oriented rail network in Europe.</p> <p>To find out more about EIM, visit <a href="http://www.eimrail.org">www.eimrail.org</a></p>
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