



The Group of Representative Bodies (GRB)

Position Paper “Linguistic Arrangements”

Brussels, 25.11.2016



References

[1] MB meeting 40, 29-11-2016, draft agenda point A.2 - Linguistic Arrangements - Explanatory note

[2] MB meeting 40, 29-11-2016, draft agenda point A.2 - Linguistic arrangements in the European Union Agency for Railways - Justification paper

[3] DRAFT DECISION n°XX - of the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Railways on Linguistic arrangements in the European Union Agency for Railways

Scope of this GRB position paper

This GRB position paper only covers the technical matters and meetings of the Agency as described in the aforesaid three documents. This document does not cover the linguistic arrangements for vehicle authorisation, safety certification and ERTMS trackside authorisation or the board of appeal.

Executive Summary

The Group of Representatives Bodies (**GRB**) partly agrees to the European Union Agency for Railways' **documents on linguistic arrangements** (Explanatory note and justification paper) and the outlined key principles.

GRB fully underlines the general **need** to make **railways** and the sector more **efficient** and to **reduce costs**. A sound approach to the linguistic arrangements (with preferably **one reference language only**) will contribute to cost reduction, efficiency and clarity. The 4th Railway Package's Technical Pillar paves the way to cheaper and more efficient processes. This goal shall not be endangered by complicated language provisions and linguistic arrangements that hamper lean processes and inevitably let costs explode in the end.

Reference working language

The Group of Representatives Bodies underlines the strong **need** for **cost reduction, efficiency and clarity** reasons. Therefore **English** shall be the **reference working language** to be used in relation to all technical matters.

French as reference language

As the European Union Agency for Railways is based in France, GRB fully supports the Agency communicating in French with the French administration and local French providers.



Meetings

All meetings including the meetings of the **Management and the Executive Board** and the **NSA, NIB** and **NRB** plenaries organised by the Agency shall be in **English**. Exceptionally and upon special written request the NSA and NIB plenaries can be organized additionally in French and German as the two other reference working languages except if other common working language(s) can be agreed between all involved participants to the meetings. All documents shall be in English.

Glossary

GRB supports the development and necessary maintenance of a glossary to ensure a common understanding of railway terminology by the Agency. The use of the glossary shall be free of charge for all players. GRB recommends not to start from scratch and base it on existing work (e.g. carried out by UIC in 17 languages for decades and CEN within its working groups). This work is acknowledged by the sector and shall not be repeated.

Fundamental rights of EU citizen

GRB agrees to the Agency respecting the right of any EU citizen to address any EU institution/body using his/her own language.

Documents

All working and meeting documents shall be in English. This includes the Agency's website as well as the Annual Report.

Costs

If documents need to be translated, although all players are capable to properly understand, the overall working processes will be slowed down and costs will increase. Insisting on a sustained translation will even lead to a cost explosion. GRB cannot accept that these costs will be most probably passed on to the sector or the tax payer.

Costs must be reduced to ensure the future of the European railway sector as a whole. Increasing costs is not acceptable.

GRB recommendation

GRB sees a stronger need to focus on the linguistic arrangements for vehicle authorisation and safety certification. Unclear arrangements could hamper the sound and uniform implementation of the 4th Railway Package's technical pillar. In this light the practical arrangements for Agency meetings seem to be less important and shall be solved as quick as possible.