



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Railway noise abatement: rail sector welcomes Commission initiative

No legal requirements necessary, but financial schemes for retro-fitting

(Brussels/Paris, 1 August 2007) The European rail sector welcomes the fact that the European Commission is taking up the topic of retrofitting existing rail freight wagons in order to reduce noise emission. In their joint contribution to a Commission consultation which closed yesterday, the rail transport associations CER, EIM, ERFA, UIC, UIP and UIRR requested that noise abatement measures must not jeopardise the sector's competitiveness and the railways' role in a sustainable transport system.

While the railways order all new vehicles with "silent" composite brake blocks, the challenge is to retro-fit the existing fleet of freight wagons. Today, about 600 000 freight wagons are in operation in Europe. The cost of retro-fitting a vehicle with composite brake blocks amounts to €4500 per wagon.

At the same time, according to a recent CER/UIC study, EU Member States are expected to invest a total of € 10 billion in passive noise abatement measures such as noise screens and building insulation. However, various studies demonstrated that allocating funds to rail freight wagon retro-fitting with composite brake blocks would be much more cost-efficient than investing into passive noise abatement measures.

Therefore the rail freight sector asks the Commission to provide financial schemes to allow public investments in rolling-stock retro-fitting and thus help Member States saving money.

The stakeholders reject any legally binding measures which would create a new financial burden for the industry leading to increased costs.

For further information, please contact:

CER - Elke Schänzler, elke.schaenzler@cer.be, +32 2 213 08 90, www.cer.be

EIM - Jérôme Guyot, jerome.guyot@eimrail.org, +32 2 234 37 73, www.eimrail.org

ERFA - Monika Heimig, monika.heimig@erfa.be

UIC - Liesbeth de Jong, dejong@uic.asso.fr, +33 1 44 49 20 53, www.uic.asso.fr

UIP - Wolf Gehrmann, wolf.gehrmann@uiprail.org, +32 2 672 88 47, www.uiprail.org

UIRR - Rudy Colle, rudycolle@uirr.com, +32 2 548 78 90, www.uirr.com