



House of Rail Press release - immediate release – Wednesday 20 May 2009

The economic crisis affects private sector rail freight

The HoR has today (20 May 2009) sent an Action Plan to European Transport Commissioner Tajani designed to help deal with the economic downturn and to ensure that the private sector parts of the industry are able to compete on a more equitable basis.

HoR members emphasise the importance at this time to ensure that state aids to incumbent operators are prohibited, that investment in rail infrastructure is accelerated, that there is more efficient regulation particularly where there is a dominant incumbent, and that operating rules are made more market-oriented.

There is a real danger that member states may seek to preserve the monopoly positions of their incumbent operators to the detriment of the private sector, which has done so much to improve service quality and reliability.

Thus, the private sector rail freight industry urges the Commission to move faster at this time, to speed up investment in infrastructure, to encourage more efficient regulation and remove technical barriers; they reject calls from the incumbent operators to delay further changes which will only delay the achievement of fair competition and a liberalised as oppose to a monopoly market.

Finally, they remind the Commission that they get no subsidy and are not looking for state aids – they expect the public sector operators to be treated in the same way.

Further information:

ERFA – Tony Berkeley +44 7710 431 542
IBS – Olaf Kruger +49 (30) 55508111
F&L & New Opera – Tom Antonissen +49 (30) 55508111
UIP - Wolf Germann, +322 672 8847
Cargo Rail Europe – Frank Furrer +41 (44) 491 15 95

Attached – House of Rail: 'Strategy Paper: Rail Freight & Economic Crisis', May 2009

Notes to editors:

The House of Rail is the Europe-wide grouping of the private sector of rail freight comprising customers, shippers, forwarders, logistics companies, independent train and terminal operators and leasing companies

Until the crisis, there has been an encouraging trend in rail freight growth across Europe with new more flexible operators providing better quality and reliability and therefore improving the attractiveness of rail. However, there is still much to do before a genuine single market is achieved.

