



## Press release

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One year ago, on 29 June 2009, the terrible accident at Viareggio, Northern Italy has hit the whole railway sector in Europe. Although it was and is clear, that the railways are the most safe land transport mode, and therefore the most appropriate means of transport for dangerous goods, this accident has triggered recent activities of the sector, where UIP was and is very present. UIP's active participation in the discussions after the terrible accident at Viareggio was always in support of proposed changes to further enhance railway safety. UIP remembers again with great emotion the 32 victims and several injured.

As a first measure, UIP played a key role in the safety conference on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2009 in Brussels, which was called by DG TREN Commissioner and European Commission Vice-President Tajani, by the Italian Minister of transport Matteoli and by the President of the European Parliament

UIP together with other European associations and the European Commission took a strong position for a harmonized approach, instead of solitary, non harmonized national steps.

Subsequent to the safety Conference, the European rail agency ERA set up a Task force (ERA, NSAs and Sector Associations), where the safety-related maintenance guidelines for wagons were evaluated.

Safety cannot be bargained in competition but at the same time, the sector demands that only harmonized safety requirements are implemented in the future. National initiatives alone cannot have the same positive impact on the level of rail safety, quality and competitiveness throughout Europe as a coordinated approach.

The sector associations CER, ERFA, UIP and UNIFE decided to set up a mirror group, called Joint Sector Support Group (JSSG). Between October and December 2009, nine meetings have been organized in order to prepare the Sector proposal for short term measures, dealing with corrosion and axle load management of type A axles. This position was presented during the Task Force meeting, held in Viareggio, on the 17th of December. This meeting in Viareggio has been called by the European Commission and the whole sector to pay a tribute to the victims and their families

The conclusion of this first step, at the end of 2009, was an agreement with NSAs to implement the so-called EVIC (European Visual Inspection Catalogue) in workshops. In 2010 the Sector will be in charge of implementing these measures.

UIP and its members will continue to play a very active role in industry discussions in order to contribute at their best to safety and competitiveness of the rail sector.