

Press release

25th April 2013

UIP welcomes the DG MOVE Initiative “Effective reduction of noise generated by rail freight wagons in the European Union”

UIP recognises that noise is a critical environmental burden that affects not only society but also the performance of the railway system around Europe. Therefore, UIP welcomes the DG MOVE initiative roadmap “Effective reduction of noise generated by rail freight wagons in the European Union” which was published on April 23, 2013.

UIP particularly appreciates and agrees that the objective of this initiative is to carry out an impact assessment of the costs and benefits from the introduction of a number of possible policy options regarding mandatory noise level limits and Noise Differentiated Track Access Charges.

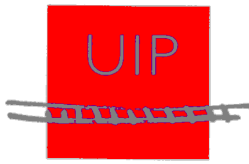
However, UIP would like to stress that the initiated impact assessment should be substantiated and scientifically accurate in order to not only justify the recommended policy option(s), but to also become the basis for the introduction of an appropriate financial framework (including TEN-T and CEF under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020).

Such solutions should not distort competition either between or within transport modes, and should ensure that the targets of the 2011 White Paper on finding a “common approach for the internalisation of noise and local pollution costs on the whole rail network” can be achieved (COM(2011)144). This also means that we steer in the right direction towards a Single European Noise Abatement Strategy.

Furthermore, the fact that DG MOVE intends to reinstate the former Noise DERC Expert Group into the Noise SERAC (Single European Railway Area) Expert Group confirms the strong need for communication and joint efforts between the European Commission, the EU-Member States and the Rail Sector.

As the representative of more than 250 Wagon Keepers in Europe (owning/managing over 180'000 freight cars), noise is one of UIP's key priorities for 2013 and UIP has already taken steps and actions to ensure that there is a pragmatic policy solution combined with a financial framework that provides indispensable incentives for its members to retrofit their existing wagons as one of the objectives of rail freight noise reduction. One such action is an event on Noise through the Rail Forum Europe on May 29th with the joint support of CER, UNIFE and ERFA.

UIP is fully committed to providing expert support from its members and discussing transparently with the EC, the Member States and the Rail Sector while aiming to develop policy solutions for noise reduction without jeopardising the competitiveness of rail transport.

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Founded in 1950, the UIP – International Union of Wagon Keepers, with its seat in Brussels, is the umbrella association of national associations from fourteen European countries, thus representing more than 250 keepers with approximately 180.000 freight wagons, performing 50 % of the rail freight tonne-Kilometres throughout Europe. The UIP represents the members' concerns at international level. By means of research, lobbying and focused cooperation with all stakeholders and organisations interested in rail freight transportation, the UIP wants to secure on the long term the future of rail freight transport.

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