

# Press announcement

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At its 67th General Assembly (GA) on the 17th of May 2017 in Amsterdam, UIP elected its Board for the next three years' term. Dr. Heiko Fischer, CEO of VTG will continue to act as President and Johannes Mansbart, CEO of GATX Rail Europe and Per-Anders Benthin, CEO of TRANSWAGGON as Vice-Presidents. Two new members, Mr. Adam Butryn, Commercial Director, GATX Rail Poland and Mr. Daniel DiStefano, President of NACCO at CIT Group Inc are joining the Board replacing Mr. Jürgen Bauer et Dr. Eckart Lehmann. President Heiko Fischer used the opportunity to "thank those leaving for their involvement and dedication and to welcome the new members of the Executive Board".

The UIP Conference following the GA discussed then key topics on new realities which rail freight is facing. Starting from the changes in Digitalisation and Innovation to the impact of the 4<sup>th</sup> Railway Package on the European framework, UIP members exchanged views on a common strategy and the best way forward. The Conference offered an open platform to discuss the challenges in rail freight transportation and the need for collaborative approaches but also political and financial support at Member State and EU levels. The key messages carried through the discussions are summarised below.

## **Paving the way towards a BIG DATA and AUTOMATIC COUPLERS strategy in rail freight**

For **Peter Boom from Voestalpine**, the sharing of data is not yet a common practice in the railway sector. With the increase of automation and the development of one-stop shop tools, he sees a growing importance for defining data spaces and common data format and to work towards a Europe-wide BIG DATA exchange.

**Thomas Heydenreich, Chairman of the UIP Topical Committee Data Exchange** reported on the latest developments on creating a European framework for data exchange. With the success of the RSRD<sup>2</sup> initiative, he pointed out the positive results of the joint efforts of the UIP's Keeper community to solve a common technical challenge at optimum cost/performance ratios.

All UIP members confirmed their support towards more open data exchanges serving the whole rail freight market and fully supported the development of RSRD<sup>2</sup> as a central system connecting worlds.

With its presentation, **Markus Vaerst, Chairman of the UIP Topical Committee Economic Evaluation** outlined the benefits of introducing automatic coupling for all relevant stakeholders. Although all agreed that rail freight needs to dramatically improve its production system, defining a migration strategy to catch up on lost decades remains a challenge which needs to be addressed at sector level and perhaps in a selective market approach.

## **A new European framework: changes, challenges, benefits?**

**Jens Engelmann from the European Union Agency for Railways** presented the elements relating to the implementation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Railway Package and the changes that are foreseen with regard to vehicle (type) authorisation, Single Safety Certificate and the role of ERA as a One-Stop-Shop (OSS). Beside the expected benefits such as having a single contact point, transparent and more predictable processes, he pointed out the need for all actors to get involved as early as possible in the SERA regional conferences and asked for a concrete support during the shadow running phase of the vehicle authorisation.

**Rainer Kogelheide, Chairman of UIP Topical Committee Safety** stressed the importance of the on-going works towards defining European risk acceptance criteria for the transport of Dangerous Goods. He pointed out some critical points and the challenges towards a mutual recognition of RID approvals based on existing regulations, sound cost-benefit analyses and considering the implementation of voluntary measures.

Finally, **Joachim Wirtgen, Chairmain of UIP Topical Committee Interoperability** highlighted the need to strengthen mutual trust, confidence and learning from failures. He used a concrete example to stress that if the railway Sector wants to succeed in managing technical issues while addressing at the same time some of the regulatory requirements embedded in the ECM regulation and the new Safety Directive, we will all have to develop a new safety culture and openly share information on operating conditions.

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### **UIP – International Union of Wagon Keepers a.i.s.b.l.**

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 200 freight wagon keepers and ECMs with more than 210'000 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.