



PRESS STATEMENT

30/10/2025, Brussels

Swiss wagon rules would create crisis

UIP raises concerns that second adjustment by Swiss Federal Office of Transport of their decree still keeps the unilateral measures on the table

The International Union of Wagon Keepers (UIP) calls on the Swiss Federal Office of Transport (FOT) to fully withdraw its unilateral wagon safety measures and rejoin the coordinated European process under the Joint Network Secretariat (JNS). The latest decree, published on 23 October 2025, removes the annual inspection deadline for freight wagons but keeps all other national requirements in place.

This regulatory zigzag creates uncertainty for operators and confirms that Switzerland is taking serious safety decisions without an impact assessment or consultation with its European partners. **The FOT's approach creates the risk of a supply chain crisis. From the fuel that powers aircraft at Zurich airport to the food on our tables, European rail freight passing through Switzerland plays a critical role in society.**

While the deletion of the annual inspection deadline reflects a recognition that the original rule was unworkable, the revised framework remains extremely difficult to implement. This approach suggests once again that Switzerland's FOT are trying to impose rules without weighing all necessary implications or engaging in the necessary pan-European efforts. As a member of the Joint Network Secretariat (JNS), the FOT has a voice in pan-European rail safety decisions and must channel its energy into that.

The technical requirements that the FOT is imposing on European rail freight passing through Switzerland continue to differ from those applied across Europe. This leaves operators facing uncertainty, increased costs, and potential disruptions to cross-border freight movements. These are precisely the risks that harmonised European rules are designed to avoid.

The Joint Network Secretariat (JNS) of the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) has already been taking action since the incident and these have led to relevant actors, including wagon keepers, making safety improvements. JNS is also now finalising harmonised recommendations on wagon safety, expected by the end of this year. Against this backdrop, there is **no justification for maintaining national rules that contradict the very process designed to deliver European alignment. As a member of the JNS, the FOT has a voice in pan-European rail safety decisions and should channel its energy into that forum rather than acting alone.**

As a party to the EU–Switzerland Land Transport Agreement, Switzerland has committed to avoiding unilateral measures that fragment the single market and create obstacles to trade. UIP, therefore, urges the Swiss authorities to withdraw the decree in its entirety, respect these obligations, and engage constructively with all partners at the JNS to agree on a single, rational framework that strengthens both safety and interoperability across Europe. Safety is achieved through collective action. In Europe, safety must be based on evidence, coordination, and trust — not on isolated national decrees.

Switzerland cannot and should not attempt to impose rules on an entire continent. A fact-based, harmonised framework is the only way to strengthen both safety and interoperability across Europe's rail freight network.

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About UIP

Founded in 1950, **UIP – International Union of Wagon Keepers**, with its seat in Brussels, is the umbrella association of national associations from 14 European countries, thus representing more than 250 freight wagon keepers and Entities in Charge of Maintenance (ECMs). As the voice for more than 255'000 rail freight wagons which perform 50 % of the rail freight tons-kilometers throughout Europe, the UIP represents half of the whole European wagon fleet and one of the most important resources for rail freight transportation in Europe.

