

Joint Declaration of Intent (DoI)

on the cooperation in promoting rail freight operations

9 April 2019

The Netherlands and Germany have a strong economic relationship. For this it is necessary to have good traffic connections between both countries and in connection with other destinations. For sustainability reasons and in particular for the achievement of the climate objectives, transport connections should be ensured preferably by environmentally friendly modes of transport like rail freight. Rail freight has high potential in the Netherlands and Germany and all European economies. The transport market study by RFC RALP, which was published on 5 March 2019, illustrates the importance of rail freight between Germany and the Netherlands. Namely between the Netherlands and Germany 29.7 million net tonnes are transported by rail, which represent 48% of the road freight volume. Moreover rail freight delivers a rapidly growing share in transport of high value products from/to Asia (China).

The Netherlands and Germany have long standing mechanisms of cooperation in the railway sector. The signatories note the need of continued efforts in the existing cooperation in infrastructure measures planning, e.g. recent initiatives for 740-m train infrastructures, the 3rd track Emmerich-Oberhausen, the Brabant and Bentheim routes, ERTMS and ETCS deployment coordination in the EU deployment framework. Also the Netherlands and Germany cooperate with other Member States in the European Rail Freight Corridors and support the ongoing activities especially in the Rhine-Alpine corridor from Rotterdam to Genoa (RALP), the North Sea Baltic and North Sea Mediterranean corridor and Scandinavian Med corridor. Reference is made to the Dutch – German Joint Declaration of Intent on cooperation in pursuit of the realization of the trans-European network of 13 February 2015. The signatories intend to build on the momentum under the Rotterdam Ministerial Declaration and Sector Statement on Boosting Rail Freight dated 21 June 2016, take note of the Vienna declaration of the Austrian EU-Presidency of 6 December 2018 and the expertise of the EU Rail Agency (ERA).

The signatories already cooperate in the reduction of noise levels in rail freight and agree on the need for fostering the attractiveness of the rail sector. They recognize the importance of exploring market opportunities for the single wagon industry as a contribution to increasing the share of rail freight in the modal split.

The signatories support the development of rail freight into an essential part of future logistics chains that contribute to multimodal transport by implementing innovative production methods, innovative rolling stock and seamless data interfaces between all actors with a view to better efficiency. Additionally, many initiatives in both countries are taken by the logistics sector to streamline operational procedures in the logistic chain.

Considering the climate challenge and the fact that rail freight has extremely low CO₂ emission per ton carried and that rail freight must therefore play an increasing role in transport, the German and Dutch signatories of this DoI intend to bundle their efforts for boosting rail freight and increasing the share of rail freight in the modal split substantially. Important initiatives for that are the two national rail freight masterplans which were made together with the rail freight business sector.

In addition to existing and above mentioned ongoing cooperation projects, this DoI will extend and intensify the exchange and common development of rail freight. The intensified cooperation is based on the national rail freight masterplans and will focus on the following areas of activities:

- 1. Operations resilience / Enhanced efficiency of network utilization5
- 2. Digitalisation and automation5
- 3. Interoperability and harmonisation6
- 4. Multimodality6
- 5. Financing and cooperation on national and EU levels7

For each area of activities, the signatories of this DoI have identified specific measures that will be pursued jointly by administrations and industry on the basis of this DoI. The progress on the activities will be monitored on a yearly basis by a high-level group under the chairmanship of the State Secretaries of both ministries. The high-level group will be prepared by a standing working group of representatives from the signatories. The working group will cooperate intensively and develop common initiatives which may include studies and pilot actions. It will foster the exchange of views on policy options and the sharing of information on recently completed, ongoing and planned research and development actions that lead to practical benefits for rail freight. The State Secretaries highly welcome the support to the DoI by the business community on both sides and their active participation.

The signatories intend to start the implementation of this DoI with the activities listed in the Annex. Immediate actions will be taken on:

- 1. Development of rail freight based on technological innovations e.g. with cross-border test field of automated driving of trains, the use of digital automated coupling system, standardized automated freight train operation in terminals or on industrial networks and automated brake testing.
- 2. Joint expert group on funding of rolling stock investment with a view to i.e. an EU scheme for facilitating investment in ERTMS OBU's and other data interfaces as well as the migration of digital automated coupling with a view to possible extension to other EU Member States and with the aim to conceive an EU funding scheme facilitating these investments.
- 3. Accelerate the start of 740 m trains on cross-border routes by exploiting interoperable digitalised planning tools, streamlining of operational procedures and benefitting from infrastructure developments in cooperation with the existing infrastructure working group. The infrastructure managers will continue safeguarding freight traffic operations on all available cross border routes linking origins to destinations as well as common network resilience management (contingency in terms of quality and quantity of train paths and scheduled adequate sidings capacity). The safeguarding gives special attention to traffic during construction works (ABS46/2).
- 4. Contingency management in case of sincere disturbances in the logistic chain including the occurrence of extreme water levels in the Rhine.

Signed in Berlin on 9 April 2019 in the English language.

For the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital
Infrastructure of the Federal Republic of Germany

For the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water
Management of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

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State Secretary

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Industry representatives in support of this DoI and committed to participating in the activities listed
in the Annex:

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Managing director traffic & transport TNO

1. Operations resilience / Enhanced efficiency of network utilization

Considering the climate challenge, the fact that rail freight has extremely low CO₂ emission per ton carried and therefore must play an increasing role in transportation, the German and Dutch stakeholders join forces for boosting rail freight. Thus they are positioned to cope with the growing volumes and changes in the product mix, whilst reducing the impact of rail freight on the environment.

Efficient utilization of the network is required. This includes synchronised planning of network upgrading with automated traffic management, which enhances the capacity of the networks as well as the attractiveness of rail freight. The EU Timetable Redesign (TTR) provides new products for dynamic freight traffic which optimize capacity utilization and process efficiency. The joint working group will support the following existing initiatives:

- 1.1 Safeguarding freight traffic operations on all available cross border routes linking origins to destinations. Common network resilience management (contingency in terms of quality and quantity of train paths and scheduled adequate sidings capacity. The safeguarding gives special attention to traffic during construction works (ABS46/2) in concerted traffic management by infrastructure managers and railway undertakings based on market-oriented planning of interruptions (timetables, diversion routes).
- 1.2 Contingency management in case of sincere disturbances in the logistic chain, including the occurrence of extreme water levels in the Rhine.

2. Digitalisation and automation

Digitalization and automation are chances for the sector. Therefore it is essential to support new initiatives in this field. The implementation of digitalised and automated systems for traffic management and for logistics management will increase the capacity of the network and allow rail freight operators to modernise their operations in compliance with customer requirements. Examples are automated braking tests and train status information as well as automation of procedures. In Germany and the Netherlands tests are undertaken for automated (driverless) driving of trains. A close and broad cooperation of administrations, operators, industry and infrastructure managers in the EU is essential to promote development in this area. This may include joint test fields. The joint working group will support the following concrete initiatives:

- 2.1 Development of rail freight based on technological innovations e.g. with cross-border test field of automated driving of trains, the use of digital automated coupling system, standardized automated freight train operation in terminals or on industrial networks and automated brake testing.
- 2.2 Digital interfaces between railway undertakings, rail freight customers/combined transport operators, infrastructure managers, terminal/access point operators and maintenance providers with information on train status and ETA.
- 2.3 Acceptance of systems for the remote monitoring regarding the condition of running trains such as hot box detection and axle load measuring.

3. Interoperability and harmonisation

Steadily the operational and technical conditions in the Single European Railway Area are harmonised. Thus traffic across the national networks is streamlined, costs due to non-interoperability are reduced and the competitive position of rail freight is strengthened. These efforts are encouraged. The joint working group will support the following concrete initiatives:

- 3.1 Accelerated start of 740 m trains on cross-border routes by exploiting interoperable digitalised planning tools, streamlining of operational procedures and benefitting from infrastructure developments.
- 3.2 Harmonization of operational, network access conditions and aligning priority rules. Developing mutually designed policies on e.g. pricing the use of infrastructure and framework conditions for terminals. Thus aiming at homogeneous conditions for rail freight and reducing the differences in Network Statements.
- 3.3 Enhanced coordination of cross-border traffic with intensified cooperation between traffic control centres and taking full advantage of border dispatchers at DB Netz and ProRail traffic control centres.
- 3.4 Enhancing interoperability by harmonization of operational regulations and administrative procedures. This includes the cross-border authorization of rolling stock, the use of languages on cross-border operations and cross-acceptance of professional qualifications with particular attention for mutual acceptance of professional qualifications such as wagon inspector and shunter, which are not yet harmonised at EU level.
- 3.5 Promoting paperless operation of trains with continued common efforts at EU level and with intensified bilateral cooperation in (ongoing) national projects.

4. Multimodality

In the next decades the mix of products transported by rail will change significantly. The volumes of certain bulk goods may decrease while the volumes of small-size shipments will increase. This trend imposes on the sector to respond with upgrading its service proposition by smoothly connecting rail freight with other transport modes as well as by modernising first and last mile services. The joint working group will support the following concrete initiatives:

- 4.1 Common initiative on drafting of a strategic vision on the development of multimodality as well as the future for single wagon load traffic taking into consideration future quantitative and qualitative market demands and their consequences for terminals, access points, marshalling/shunting yards.
- 4.2 Measures to improve access to rail freight for new users by means of easy access to rail freight capacity (terminals or access points), last/first mile facilities with cross-border coordination of routing options and integration of rail freight in urban logistics.

5. Financing and cooperation on national and EU levels

Steadily rail freight evolves into a Europe wide network of borderless service with funding from the sector itself, European schemes and national budgets. It becomes increasingly important to exchange experiences on support initiatives and liaise on common approaches. Vast investments in production processes, infrastructure, service facilities, interactive technologies and rolling stock will be needed for enabling rail to cope with capacity demands and expectations as to digitalisation, automation and modernization. The joint working group will support the following concrete initiatives:

- 5.1 Joint expert group on funding of rolling stock investment with a view to i.e. an EU scheme for facilitating investment in ERTMS OBU's and other data interfaces as well as the migration of digital automated coupling with a view to possible extension to other EU Member States and with the aim to conceive an EU funding scheme facilitating these investments.
- 5.2 Intensified cooperation at EU level in particular in the field of TSI TAF, railway undertakings and terminal advisory groups of the rail freight corridors.
- 5.3 Common analysis of transfer of benefits/ compensation models (market failure due to divergence of costs and benefits).
- 5.4 Joint initiative for input to Shift2Rail on strategy for next programme cycle, including:
 - Dynamic path allocation, facilitation measures (Time Table Redesign)
 - Harmonised conditions and standards for automated operations of trains
 - Automated shunting/train formation
 - External effects of rail freight transport
- 5.5 Focus on sustainable mobility in the next EC Commission work programme: priority for rail freight in the next EU Financial Framework (2021-2027) - Impact of the Paris Agreement.